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The book of the prophet
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THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET
EZEKIEL

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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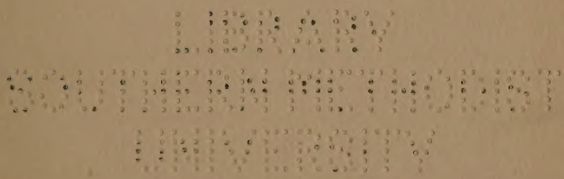

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PREFATORY NOTE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR

THE primary object of these Commentaries is to be exegetical, to interpret the meaning of each book of the Bible in the light of modern knowledge to English readers. The Editors will not deal, except subordinately, with questions of textual criticism or philology; but taking the English text in the Revised Version as their basis, they will aim at combining a hearty acceptance of critical principles with loyalty to the Catholic Faith.

The series will be less elementary than the Cambridge Bible for Schools, less critical than the International Critical Commentary, less didactic than the Expositor's Bible; and it is hoped that it may be of use both to theological students and to the clergy, as well as to the growing number of educated laymen and laywomen who wish to read the Bible intelligently and reverently.

Each commentary will therefore have

(i) An Introduction stating the bearing of modern criticism and research upon the historical character of the book, and drawing out the contribution which the book, as a whole, makes to the body of religious truth.

(ii) A careful paraphrase of the text with notes on the more difficult passages and, if need be, excursuses on any

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points of special importance either for doctrine, or ecclesiastical organization, or spiritual life.

But the books of the Bible are so varied in character that considerable latitude is needed, as to the proportion which the various parts should hold to each other. The General Editor will therefore only endeavour to secure a general uniformity in scope and character: but the exact method adopted in each case and the final responsibility for the statements made will rest with the individual contributors.

By permission of the Delegates of the Oxford University Press and of the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press the Text used in this Series of Commentaries is the Revised Version of the Holy Scriptures.

WALTER LOCK

PREFACE

IN the compilation of this volume I have endeavoured first of all to arrive at opinions concerning the meaning and purpose of the prophet independently, as far as possible, of those who have preceded me. It was only when this had been done that I have consulted previous commentators, in order to see if any points, which ought to be noted, had been overlooked; and, in all important cases, acknowledgments of indebtedness have been duly made.

In the study of any book of the Bible extremely valuable help can be obtained from a discreet use of the marginal references to be found in many editions of the Revised Version. I have constantly consulted various Dictionaries of the Bible as well as the new Oxford Hebrew Lexicon. No student can properly measure the difficulties connected with the Hebrew text of Ezekiel, except by a careful use of the Septuagint version which is invaluable for the greater part of this book, even though the translator has failed to grasp, in part, the meaning of some of the later chapters.

The description of the ideal Temple can scarcely be understood without the assistance of illustrations, and for those to be found in this volume I owe great gratitude to my friend Mr W. Hilton Nash, F.R.I.B.A., whose drawings, carefully made to scale, will, I hope, materially assist the reader. Conjectures have had to be hazarded on certain points as, for instance, where the actual position of some of

the chambers is not given. But no unnecessary tampering with the text has been attempted, nor indeed is it required.

My work has been a labour of love spread over several years. It must, from the nature of its subject matter, be imperfect; but I hope that it may help to make the meaning of this great prophet clearer. Such as it is, I pray that it may contribute, in its small measure, to the glory of God and the good of His Church.

HENRY A. REDPATH

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III. Side Elevation of the Altar of Burnt Offerings „ „

ERRATUM

Page 19, col. 2, line 4. *For* Zechariah *read* Zedekiah.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Prophet Ezekiel, his life and character. Of Ezekiel who is reckoned as the third of the greater Prophets, so called in all probability from the amount of prophecies attributed to them which have survived, we know but little. In i. 2, 3, an explanatory note inserted to make clear who it is that is speaking in i. 1, he is described as 'the priest, the son of Buzi.' His name, meaning 'God strengthens,' is not a common one, and only occurs besides, in R.V. under the form Jehezkel, as that of the leader of the twentieth of the twenty-four courses of priests whose names are given in 1 Chr. xxiv. 16. The name Hezekiah, 'Jehovah[1] strengthens,' is a corresponding one with the other divine appellation as its last portion. Of Buzi nothing is known: the form suggests a family rather than an individual[2]. Some Jewish authorities identify Buzi with Jeremiah, who was certainly a prophet, perhaps because of the acquaintance which Ezekiel shews with the prophecies of the elder prophet. We know nothing of his early years, but from his way of speaking of 'our captivity' (xxxiii. 21) we gather that he was one of those carried off with Jehoiachin (2 K. xxiv. 10, 11). As to his age at that time we cannot speak with certainty. Some have considered that the thirtieth year of i. 1 meant the thirtieth year of the prophet's life, and hold that it was most suitable that the prophet's call and career should have begun at the very time of his life at which, had he been at Jerusalem,

[1] The Divine Name is printed in this form throughout this volume, as being the most familiar to the reader.

[2] The only persons bearing the name of Buz in the O.T. are (*a*) a son of Nahor (Gen. xxii. 21); and (*b*) a man belonging to the tribe of Gad (1 Chr. v. 14).

he would have commenced to discharge his sacerdotal office. In Babylonia he was planted with others of his own nation by the banks of one of the irrigating canals, which was called Chebar, at a place called Tel-abib (iii. 15), where he had his own house (viii. 1). The exact site of this place is unknown. He was a married man, and the loss of his wife, in a sudden and unexpected way, was made, by divine instruction, a lesson to the people (xxiv. 15–27). He spent twenty-two years in the discharge of his prophetical office. Beyond that, and as to the length of his life we know nothing. The only allusion to him in the rest of the scriptures is that made by the son of Sirach (Ecclus. xlix. 8, 9):—

> It was Ezekiel who saw the vision of glory,
> Which God shewed him upon the chariot of the cherubim.

His visions of God and of God's glory presented themselves to his mind somewhat after the fashion of the sculptures of strange and fantastic animals which were to be seen on the walls of the Babylonian Temples. We must take them for what they are, we cannot accurately define or pourtray them in black and white. We may sum up the intention of the prophet's description in the words of the Psalmist:—"In His temple everything saith, Glory" (Ps. xxix. 9).

Ezekiel was above all else a visionary. He was one of the young men, to use the language of Joel, who under the influence of the Spirit of God saw visions, and who, as he grew older, dreamed dreams of a future time of glory and prosperity for his nation in a rebuilt Jerusalem with a new and glorious Temple, and in a regenerated land. Of his moral teaching we must speak later. But his teaching and preaching seem to have had but little effect, partly, perhaps, because his hearers could not understand him, but also because they were so crushed and overwhelmed by their captivity that they despaired of there ever being a national resurrection such as he tried to stimulate them to believe in. He spoke the truth with constancy to his hearers, but just because of that they did not accept his teaching in such a way as to give it any practical effect.

One of the most striking modes of that teaching is that in which he carried out in actions before the people an outline of what was happening to their city during the final siege. There seems no good reason for doubting the actual performance of these symbolic acts. We know how, where modern means of communication are

not available, news travels even to-day with startling rapidity, and we may well imagine that such was the case with regard to the events that were occurring in Palestine. At any rate, in whatever way the tidings came to him, the prophet seems to have been well aware of all that was passing, and by his acts made it known to his fellow-countrymen.

He seems to have taken a great interest in geographical details of the then known world, outside those portions of it which had come within his own ken. His knowledge seems to have extended to Tarshish and the shores of the Mediterranean on one side, Sheba in another direction, the country between the Black Sea and the Caspian in another, and Egypt and Libya in yet another. The chapter (xxvii.) dealing with the commercial intercourse of Tyre with other countries shews this. Moreover his prophecies do not deal only with the Jewish world. One considerable section of them contains denunciations of the chief empires of the world, and of other nations.

Ezekiel was a great idealist. He looked forward to an ideal condition for his native land under an ideal ruler of the old reigning family of David; he anticipated a reunited kingdom and an ideal restored temple with its services. His own connection with the priestly family of Zadok led him to attach great importance to the maintenance of the public service of God with all its rites and ceremonies. But with him all this was but the husk. The kernel of the renewed life of the people was to be spiritual, with a deep personal sense of sin and of responsibility. Without this all else would be vain and useless.

There remains to be considered the title, Son of man, which is given to him throughout the book, and which occurs at the commencement of all his prophecies. It has a special interest because in the Old Testament Ezekiel, with the exception of Daniel (viii. 17), is the only individual to whom the title is applied, and that title, generally in the more definite form, 'the Son of man,' is appropriated by our Lord to Himself in all the four Gospels, apparently with an implied reference to Dan. vii. 13: 'there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man' (this idea is reproduced in Rev. i. 13: xiv. 14). Outside the Gospel the title is only certainly used of our Lord once, without any expression

of similitude, and that by S. Stephen :—'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God' (Acts vii. 5, 6). In the Old Testament it is used generally and not particularly, e.g. in Ps. viii. 4.

> What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?
> And the son of man, that Thou visitest him?

In such a passage as this the title 'son of man' implies humility to God-ward, but a certain sense of superiority in relation to the rest of the natural world.

It is scarcely within our province here to discuss the meaning of the title in the New Testament, though we may say, after the analogy of its use just quoted, that it is an accurate designation of One Who was meek and lowly among the sons of men, and yet was spiritually exalted above all the rest of those sons of men. Of the prophet, also, we may say, that his designation by that title was intended to remind him of his humble position, whilst at the same time it indicated to what high privileges of communion with God he was to be admitted. Something of this sort must certainly be allowed to its constant occurrence, for the title is used about one hundred times.

2. The text of the Book. The Hebrew text of this book is more corrupt than that of many portions of the O.T. This will appear in many of the notes in the Commentary. The text can very often be amended by means of the Septuagint. But there are places where the meaning of words (e.g. *pannag* xxvii. 17) cannot be ascertained; and the architectural details of the last chapters seem to have puzzled and confused the transcriber of the present Massoretic text. Much has been done towards the elucidation of these difficulties, especially by Cornill in his *Das Buch des Propheten Ezechiel*, Leipzig, 1886. Attempts have also been made in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* to accommodate the Hebrew text to the Arabian and Jerahmeelite theories which are emphasized in that work. Scarcely any doubt has ever been cast even by the extremest critics upon the unity and authenticity of the book, though a few glosses and interpretative words or notes may have found their way into the text. It does not, therefore, present such problems for discussion as many other books offer.

3. The Chronology of the Book. The whole of the prophecies of this book are arranged in sections each of which begins with a date. Ezekiel's own captivity and deportation is fixed for B.C. 597 (i. 1)—

His prophecies are dated, as in the following table:

A.	B.C. 592 (5th day of the month)	i. 2–iii. 15.
B.	B.C. 592 (12th day of the month)	iii. 16–vii.
C.	B.C. 591 (5th day of the 6th month)	viii.–xix.
D.	B.C. 590 (10th day of the 5th month)	xx.–xxiii.
E.	B.C. 588 (10th day of the 10th month)	xxiv., xxv.
F.	B.C. 586 (1st day of the month)	xxvi.–xxviii.
G^1.	B.C. 587 (12th day of the 10th month)	xxix. 1–16.
H.	B.C. 570 (1st day of the 1st month)	xxix. 17–21.
G^2.	(really part of G^1)	xxx. 1–19.
I.	B.C. 586 (7th day of the 1st month)	xxx. 20–26
J.	B.C. 586 (1st day of the 3rd month)	xxxi.
K.	B.C. 585 (1st day of the 12th month)	xxxii. 1–16.
L.	B.C. 585 (15th day of the month)	xxxii. 17–xxxiii. 20.
M.	B.C. 585 (5th day of the 10th month)	xxxiii. 21–xxxix.
N.	B.C. 572 (10th day of the month "in the beginning of the year")	xl.–xlviii.

It will be noticed that in certain cases the number of the month is not given. This is perhaps due to the faulty state of the text and is not an original omission. Except in A and B it can almost certainly be filled up. In F the month is the 1st as in I; in L the month is the 12th as in K. The prophecies are for the most part arranged in the order of their delivery, and there is no reason to doubt that this is generally correct. The exceptions are:—

(*a*) Section H is introduced where it is to complete the story about Tyre and Egypt. The insertion of this short section seems to involve some confusion with regard to sections F, G^1, G^2 and I. Tyre as well as Egypt had to be dealt with before H could follow, whilst at the same time an anxiety is manifested to introduce it, as soon as the first prophecy concerning Egypt is uttered. Hence the dislocation.

(*b*) Sections K and L are inserted before M to complete the set of Egyptian prophecies. In L a date seems to have disappeared altogether at xxxiii. 1, for xxxiii. 1–20 has obviously no connection whatever with the preceding prophecy.

It is to be noted that the date of E exactly coincides with the

date given in 2 K. xxv. 1 for the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem in Zedekiah's reign.

4. Ezekiel's style. The following list of phrases and expressions peculiar, or nearly so, to the prophet, will shew that he has a definite style of his own. There are also to be found certain notable modes of expression. He is fond of interrogative forms of sentence, e.g. viii. 6 "Son of man, seest thou what they do?", and an occasional use of interjectional sentences. He also, when the opportunity presents itself, delights in using (*a*) proverbial as well as (*b*) parabolic and allegorical expressions. Such are:—(*a*) "The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth" (xii. 22); "the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (xviii. 2); "as is the mother, so is her daughter" (xvi. 44); and (*b*) "A great eagle with great wings and long pinions, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took off the top of the cedar..." (xvii. 3). Ezekiel also has several dirges or lamentations of the form called *kînah*, which have various rhythmic constructions in Hebrew. They occur in xix. 1: xxvi. 17: xxvii. 2, 32: xxviii. 12: xxxii. 2, and should be compared with the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and those in 2 Sam. i. 19: iii. 33: Am. v. 1: Jer. ix. 19.

To add to all this, the description of symbolic actions and symbolic visions is a special characteristic of this prophet. We have discussed elsewhere the question whether the actions described were all actually carried out: it seems most probable that they were. As to his visions the character of a clairvoyant has often been assigned to the prophet: we may declare at any rate with certainty that he could read indications of what was coming from what was going on around him: and all this is clear in his language and mode of expression.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF EZEKIEL'S STYLE.

[In each case the exact form given is that of the first passage quoted.]

by the river Chebar i. 1 : iii. 15, 23 : x. 15, 20, 22 : xliii. 3.
visions of God i. 1 : viii. 3 : xl. 2.
the hand of the Lord was there upon him i. 3 : iii. 14, 22 : viii. 1 : xxxiii. 22 : xxxvii. 1 : xl. 1.
as the colour of amber i. 4, 27 : viii. 2.
Son of man ii. 1, 3, 6, 8 : iii. 1, 3, 4, 10, 17, 25 : iv. 1, 15 : v. 1 : vi. 2 : vii. 2 : viii. 5, 6, 8, 12, 15, 17 : xi. 2, 15 : xii. 2, 3, 9, 17, 22, 26 : xiii. 2, 17 : xiv. 3, 13 : xv. 2 : xvi. 2 : xvii. 2 : xx. 3, 4, 27, 46 : xxi. 2, 6, 9, 14, 19, 28 : xxii. 2, 18, 24 : xxiii. 2, 36 : xxiv. 2, 16, 25 : xxv. 2 : xxvi. 2 : xxvii. 2 : xxviii. 2, 12, 21 : xxix. 2, 18 : xxx. 2, 21 : xxxi. 2 ; xxxii. 2, 18 : xxxiii. 2, 7, 10, 12, 24, 30 : xxxiv. 2 : xxxv. 2 : xxxvi. 1, 17 : xxxvii. 3, 9, 11, 16 : xxxviii. 2, 14 : xxxix. 1 : xl. 4 : xliii. 7, 10, 18 : xliv. 5 : xlvii. 6.
whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear ii. 5, 7 : iii. 11.
rebellious house ii. 5, 6, 8 : iii. 9, 26, 27 : xii. 2, 3, 9, 25 : xvii. 12 : xxiv. 3.
shall know that there hath been a prophet among them ii. 5 : xxxiii. 33.
the children of thy people iii. 11 : xxxiii. 2, 12, 17, 30 : xxxvii. 18.
the spirit lifted me up iii. 12, 14 : viii. 3 : xi. 1, 24 : xliii. 5.
therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them warning from me iii. 17 : xxxiii. 7.
when I say unto the wicked iii. 18 : xxxiii. 8.
shall die in his iniquity iii. 18 : xviii. 18
his blood will I require iii. 18, 20 : xxxiii. 6, 8.
delivered thy soul iii. 19, 21 : xiv. 14, 20 : xxxiii. 5, 9.
turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity iii. 20 : xviii. 24, 26 : xxxiii. 18.
his righteous deeds which he hath done shall not be remembered iii. 20 : xviii. 24 : xxxiii. 13.
build forts...cast up a mount iv. 2 : xvii. 17 : xxi. 22 : xxvi. 8.
set thy face toward (*against*) iv. 3, 7 : vi. 2 : xiii. 17 : xx. 46 : xxi. 2 : xxv. 2 : xxviii. 21 : xxix. 2 : xxxv. 2 : xxxviii. 2.
bear...iniquity iv. 4, 5, 6 : xliv. 10, 12.
in their sight (*before their eyes*) iv. 12 : xii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 : xxi. 6 : xxxvii. 20 : xxxviii. 16 : xliii. 11 ; *in the sight of the nation* v. 8 : xxii. 16.
Ah Lord God! iv. 14 : ix. 8 : xi. 13 : xx. 49.
break the staff of bread iv. 16 : v. 16 : xiv. 13.
they shall eat bread...with carefulness; and they shall drink water...with astonishment iv. 16 : xii. 19.
pine away in their iniquity iv. 17 : xxiv. 23 : cp. xxxiii. 10.
I will draw out a sword after them v. 2, 12 : xii. 14.
have done after the ordinances of the nations that are round about you v. 7 : xi. 12.

Behold, I am against thee v. 8: xiii. 8: xxi. 3: xxvi. 3: xxviii. 22: xxix. 3, 10: xxx. 22: xxxiv. 10: xxxv. 3: xxxviii. 3: xxxix. 1.
execute judgements in the midst of thee v. 8, 10: xi. 9: xvi. 41: xxiii. 10.
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neither shall mine eye spare, and I also will have no pity v. 11: vii. 4, 9: viii. 18: ix. 5, 10: cp. xx. 17.
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satisfy my fury v. 13: xvi. 42: xxi. 17: xxiv. 13.
I have spoken in my zeal (jealousy) v. 13: xxxvi. 6: xxxviii. 19.
furious rebukes v. 15: xxv. 17.
evil (noisome) beasts v. 17: xiv. 15, 21: xxxiv. 25.
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they shall loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils which they have committed vi. 9: xx. 43: cp. xxxvi. 31.
stretch out mine hand upon vi. 14: xxv. 7, 13, 16: xxxv. 3.
judge...according to...ways vii. 3, 8: xviii. 30: xxxiii. 20.
bring...way upon... vii. 4: ix. 10: xi. 21: xvi. 43: xxii. 31.
pour out...fury upon vii. 8: ix. 8: xiv. 19: xx. 8, 13, 21: xxii. 22: xxxvi. 18.
all hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as water vii. 17: xxi. 7.
stumblingblock of...iniquity vii. 19: xiv. 3, 4, 7: xliv. 12.
the elders of Judah (Israel) sat before me viii. 1: xiv. 1: xx. 1.
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make a full end xi. 13: xx. 17.
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they shall be my people and I will be their God xi. 20: xiv. 11: xxxvi. 28: xxxvii. 23.

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cause to pass through the fire xvi. 21 : xx. 26, 31 : xxiii. 37.
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hath taken increase xviii. 8, 13 : xxii. 12.
shall be remembered against him xviii. 22 : xxxiii. 16.
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Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal xviii. 25 : xxxiii. 17, 20 : cp. xviii. 29.
When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall die therein xviii. 26 : xxxiii. 18.

When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness and doeth that which is lawful and right xviii. 27 : xxxiii. 19 : cp. xxxiii. 14.
for why will ye die, O house of Israel? xviii. 31 : xxxiii. 11.
take up a lamentation for xix. 1 : xxvi. 17 : xxvii. 2, 32 : xxviii. 12 : xxxii. 2.
wilt thou judge...wilt thou judge? xx. 4 : xxii. 2 : cp. xxiii. 36.
lifted up mine hand (unto) xx. 5, 6, 15, 23, 28, 42 : xxxvi. 7 : xlvii. 14.
know that I am the Lord that sanctify xx. 12 : xxxvii. 28.
profane my sabbaths xx. 13, 16, 21, 24 : xxii. 8 : xxiii. 38.
I will be sanctified in you xx. 41 : xxviii. 22, 25 : xxxvi. 23 : xxxviii. 16 : xxxix. 27.
behold, it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord God xxi. 7 : xxxix. 8.
in the time of the iniquity of the end xxi. 25 : xxxv. 5.
I will blow upon thee with the fire of my wrath xxi. 31 : xxii. 21.
the bloody city xxii. 2 : xxiv. 6, 9.
scatter among the nations xxii. 15 : xxxvi. 19.
difference between the holy and the common...caused men to discern between the unclean and the clean xxii. 26 : xliv. 23.
Aha! xxv. 3 : xxvi. 2 : xxxvi. 2.
despite of soul xxv. 6, 15 : xxxvi. 5.
a place for the spreading of nets xxvi. 5, 14 : xlvii. 10.
shake at the sound of his fall xxvi. 15 : xxxi. 16.
they shall tremble (at) every moment xxvi. 16 : xxxii. 10.
the nether parts of the earth xxvi. 20 : xxxi. 14, 16, 18 : xxxii. 18, 24.
with them that go down to the pit xxvi. 20 : xxxi. 14 : xxxii. 18, 24.
in the land of the living xxvi. 20 : xxxii. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 32.
perfect in beauty xxvii. 3 : xxviii. 12; *have perfected thy beauty* xxvii. 4, 11.
their kings are horribly afraid xxvii. 35 : xxxii. 10.
thou art become a terror, and thou shalt never be any more xxvii. 36 : xxviii. 19 : cp. xxvi. 21.
the terrible of the nations xxviii. 7 : xxx. 11 : xxxi. 12 : xxxii. 12.
the garden of God xxviii. 13 : xxxi. 8, 9.
I will put hooks in thy jaws xxix. 4 : xxxviii. 4.
I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries xxix. 12 : xxx. 23, 26.
the pride of her power xxx. 6, 18 : xxxiii. 28.
year of our captivity xxxiii. 21 : xl. 1.
I will make with them a covenant of peace xxxiv. 25 : xxxvii. 26.
none shall make them afraid xxxiv. 28 : xxxix. 26.
will bring you into your own land xxxvi. 24 : xxxvii. 21 : cp. xxxvii. 12.
I will put my spirit within you xxxvi. 27 : xxxvii. 14.
I will turn thee about xxxviii. 4 : xxxix. 2.
the uttermost parts of the north xxxviii. 6, 15 : xxxix. 2.
behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears xl. 4 : xliv. 5.
the keepers of the charge of the house xl. 45 : xliv. 14.
the separate place xli. 12, 13, 14, 15 : xlii. 1, 10, 13.

shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate xliv. 3 : xlvi. 2.
when the children of Israel went astray xliv. 15 : xlviii. 11 : cp. xliv. 10.

N.B. In some cases these expressions occur also in other books, but none the less they may be said to be characteristic of Ezekiel.

5. Ezekiel and the Pentateuch. No one can doubt for a moment the intimate connection between Ezekiel and those parts of the Pentateuch which are ascribed by modern critics to P and D. But that there are also passages which shew a knowledge of the other parts of the Torah or at any rate of its history is also clear. The destruction of Sodom (J) is distinctly referred to (xvi. 49, 50). The description of Canaan as a land flowing with milk and honey comes originally from J (Ex. iii. 8), though it occurs also in P, and there seems to be a distinct allusion to Gen. xlix. 10 (J) in xxi. 27 : 'until he come whose right it is.' The list of the peoples engaged in commerce with Tyre (xxvii.) uses the parts of Gen. x. which are assigned to J as well as those assigned to P : and this is true also of the countries mentioned in xxxviii. and might be used as a contributory argument towards proving that Ezekiel knew the Pentateuch practically in the form that it now has. There are points, and this perhaps is the most difficult case to deal with, common to Ezekiel's 'Eden, the garden of God' (xxviii. 13 *ff.*, xxxi. 8, 9, 16, 18) and the Eden of J (Gen. ii., iii.), but other parts of the prophet's language give the idea that it has been influenced by his Babylonian surroundings. The idea of spiritual fornication, more than once occurring in Ezekiel, is met with first in JE, as is also the condemnation of usury and withholding of pledges (Ex. xxii. 21, 26 compared with xviii. 7, 8, 13). The smiting of the hands together in wrath (xxi. 14, 17) occurs first in JE (Num. xxiv. 10).

It is not the province of a commentator upon Ezekiel to discuss the dates of the various documents which are supposed to underlie our present Pentateuch : but it does fall within his province to consider whether Ezekiel is dependent upon D and P, or P and D are dependent upon Ezekiel. As to D, though Professor Kennett (*Journal of Th. Studies*, July 1906) has argued in favour of an exilic date for Deuteronomy, his arguments seem inconclusive, and the great majority of critics would allow that D is the senior document. But with reference to P, between which and the prophet there is a much

more intimate connection[1], opinion is much more evenly divided. In discussing the question, it has to be remembered, with reference to chaps. xl.–xlviii., that it is equally possible for an ideal to be evolved from a working system, as for a working system to be evolved from an ideal. One of the best discussions of the subject is to be found in Möller's *Are the Critics Right?* (Eng. tr. R. T. S. 1903), to which the present writer is greatly indebted. In his opinion the most easy way to determine between the two views is to test them with reference in particular to Ez. xl.–xlviii., and this will lead us to the conclusion that, where they meet, the indications are most favourable to Ezekiel's ideal being the later of the two. It is obvious, to begin with, that Ezekiel's ideal does not profess to give a complete legislation: he presupposes the knowledge of previous legislation of a wider character than his own.

Otherwise we are compelled to believe that he intended to abrogate certain provisions of Hebrew law which are universally acknowledged to have been binding before the regulations of P were committed to writing, e.g. the observance of the feast of weeks. In one case, at least, he actually runs counter not to P, but to what is supposed to be much earlier legislation—that about the approach to the altar by steps (xliii. 17 compared with Ez. xx. 26). Are we then to say that Ezekiel is earlier than this legislation? This would follow from the arguments used with reference to P.

Again in discussing this question we have to answer another. Would a more systematic legislation follow a less systematic or *vice versâ*? The answer to this question is not a difficult one to make. The more systematic would be the later: if we look into it we shall find that Ezekiel is more systematic, e.g. in xlv. 24, xlvi. 5, 7: therefore we may conclude that Ezekiel is the later.

Again, if an ideal was in existence, and one put forth with all the authority of a recognized prophet of the Lord, what right would the priestly body have, who after all were only an executive body, to publish almost contemporaneously, a counter scheme of legislation to that which had been promulgated with what claimed to be divine

[1] There are perhaps about 60 passages in which a connection with P may be traced. The chief sections in which there is this connection with P, or with D, or with both, occur in chapters iv., v., xiv., xvi., xx., xxii., xxvii., xxxiv., xl.–xlviii.

sanction? None whatever: and we are driven at once to the same conclusion that P was the earlier, and that not only on the basis of P, but with the recognition of the existence of other previous legislation of greater antiquity than most critics would be disposed to allow, Ezekiel framed his ideal of worship for an ideal temple reared in an ideal Palestine, and claimed for it divine sanction. That its ideal character was recognized is proved by the fact that the second temple was never acknowledged to be identical with Ezekiel's temple, and therefore no attempt was made to carry out his ideal legislation, which was never intended to be enforced till his ideal temple could be erected. If any later legislation had been taken in hand, it must have been exactly on the lines of the revelation to the prophet.

In the present section I have dealt only with the priority of one code to the other and with no other arguments about the date of P as, for instance, that, if it had been pre-exilic, we should have found it rigidly observed.

There is, however, another question which arises and which has caused difficulty in connection with D—the degradation of certain 'Levites,' from which, it is concluded, began the distinction between the priests and Levites, such as is certainly laid down in the legislation of P. It is assumed that these 'Levites' were priests. If they were, at any rate they were not of the sons of Zadok, for we are told of these (xliv. 24) that they remained faithful. They could only, then, be the sons of Abiathar, the Abiathar who had been thrust out by Solomon from being priest. But little that is definite can be argued about the persons mentioned by Ezekiel. They are not even asserted to be priests at all, and are only called Levites, whereas the orthodox line of priests are called 'the priests the Levites' in exact agreement with the usage of Deut. (xvii. 9: xviii. 1: xxiv. 8: xxvii. 9), or 'the priests...from among the sons of Levi.' No express conclusion, therefore, can be drawn about these degraded persons from the text of Ezekiel in its present condition, for Ezekiel could hardly have spoken of them as 'Levites' if there were no Levites other than the Zadokian priests. Further particulars may be found in the commentary on the passage[1].

[1] One problem which at present seems insoluble is:—Why is there no high priest in Ezekiel's legislation? Is it that in some way or other it is intended that 'the prince' should be the head of the new Jewish Church as well as of the Jewish State? The present writer only throws this out as a suggestion.

6. Ezekiel and the Book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah and Ezekiel were contemporaries, though Jeremiah was the senior of the two. We have no information that they had ever met or seen one another before the deportation of Ezekiel. But they have points of contact in their prophecies and the most reasonable view is to suppose that the younger prophet knew something of the utterances of the elder, whilst the elder also takes up expressions of the younger[1]. This would be quite an easy matter, for communication was constant between the exiles and those left behind in Jerusalem. To both prophets 'the north' was the source of trouble and misfortune (e.g. Ez. xxvi. 7 compared with Jer. i. 14). The following expressions may be noticed in the two prophets :—

[The exact form of English words quoted below is that of the first passage.]

Be not afraid of them (Jer. i. 8 : Ezek. ii. 6).
shall die in his iniquity (Jer. xxxi. 30 : Ezek. iii. 18, 19 : xviii. 18).
I lay a stumblingblock before him (Jer. vi. 21: Ezek. iii. 20).
I will give them one heart (Ezek. xi. 19 : Jer. xxxii. 39).
Behold, I am against you (Ezek. xiii. 8 : Jer. xxi. 13).
saying, Peace, peace ; when there is no peace (Jer. vi. 14 : Ezek. xiii. 10 : cp. xiii. 16).
to play the harlot (Jer. ii. 20 : iii. 1, 6 : Ezek. xvi. 15).
take up a lamentation (Jer. vii. 29 : Ezek. xix. 1, etc.).
to smite upon the thigh (Jer. xxxi. 19 : Ezek. xxi. 12).
they are brass and iron (Jer. vi. 28 : Ezek. xxii. 18).
in mine anger and in my fury (Ezek. xxii. 20 : Jer. xxxiii. 5).
the wounded groan (Jer. li. 52 : Ezek. xxvi. 15).
wallow in ashes (Jer. vi. 26 : cp. xxv. 34 : Ezek. xxvii. 30).
shall fall upon the open field (Jer. ix. 22 : Ezek. xxix. 5).
all the mingled people (Jer. xxv. 20 : l. 37 : Ezek. xxx. 5).
Woe unto the shepherds (Jer. xxiii. 1 : Ezek. xxxiv. 2).
I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them (Jer. xxiii. 4 : Ezek. xxxiv. 23).
serve themselves of him (Jer. xxx. 8 : Ezek. xxxiv. 27).
having neither bars nor gates (Jer. xlix. 31 : Ezek. xxxviii. 11).
I will call for a sword (Jer. xxv. 29 : Ezek. xxxviii. 21).

The following verses may also be compared :—vii. 15 with Jer. xiv. 18 ; xiii. 23 with Jer. xxiii. 14 ; xxxix. 17 with Jer. xii. 9. The following points are also worthy of notice. The name

[1] In the following list of phrases the prophets are named in each case in the chronological order of their prophecies.

Azzur which only occurs elsewhere in Neh. x. 17 occurs in both prophets (Ez. xi. 1: Jer. xxviii. 1): and Pekod, if it is a genuine name, only occurs in Jer. l. 21: Ezek. xxiii. 23. The form of argument of Jer. xv. 1 'Though Moses and Samuel stood before me yet...' is adopted in Ezek. xiv. 14 'though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it...' Both quote the same proverb: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge' (Jer. xxxi. 29: Ezek. xviii. 2). The section about Oholah and Oholibah (Ezek. xxiii.) is a development of Jer. iii. 6–11.

7. Ezekiel and the Book of Daniel. There seems no reason to doubt that the Daniel of Ezekiel (xiv. 14, 20: xxviii. 3) is the prophet: the last passage seems to indicate this clearly. It is also evident that the language of the later prophecies owes something to Ezekiel. A few coincidences may be quoted :—

Ezekiel.	Daniel.
i. 16 like unto the colour of a beryl, cp. x. 9.	x. 6 like the beryl.
i. 26 as the appearance of a man.	viii. 15 as the appearance of a man.
ii. 1 etc. Son of man.	viii. 17 O son of man.
ii. 9 an hand was put forth unto me.	x. 10 a hand touched me.
ix. 2 one man...clothed in linen.	x. 5 a man clothed in linen, cp. xii. 6, 7.
xii. 27 The vision...is for many days to come.	viii. 26 the vision: for it belongeth to many days to come, cp. x. 14.
xvii. 23 in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.	iv. 12 the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the branches thereof.
xxvi. 7 King of Kings (of Nebuchadrezzar).	ii. 37 King of Kings (of the same).
xxxi. 1–9 The Assyrian compared to a cedar.	iv. 10–22 Nebuchadrezzar compared to a tree.
xxxi. 10 his heart is lifted up.	v. 20 his heart was lifted up.

The above quotations do not adequately represent the influence which the apocalyptic portions of Ezekiel have had upon Daniel. To realise its whole force, they should be read together.

8. Ezekiel and the Apocalypse of St John. No reader of these two books can fail to see how much the language and imagery of the Apocalypse has behind it that of Ezekiel. Dr Swete,

in his edition of the Apocalypse (1906), quotes 29 passages from the Revelation, comparing the language with that of the Septuagint, but without professing to be exhaustive. In no case are the words a quotation, they are an assimilation of the language of the prophet. The following list contains a somewhat larger number of coincidences.

Ezekiel.	Revelation.
i. 1 the heavens were opened.	xix. 11 I saw the heaven opened.
i. 5–10 out of the midst thereof... four living creatures...the face of a man...of a lion...of an ox... of an eagle (cp. x. 14 the face of a man...of a lion...of an eagle).	iv. 6–8 in the midst...four living creatures...like a lion...like a calf...a face as of a man...like a flying eagle.
i. 7 the sole of their feet...like the colour of burnished brass (cp. xl. 3 like the appearance of brass).	i. 15 his feet like unto burnished brass (cp. ii. 18 his feet are like unto burnished brass).
i. 13 out of the fire went forth lightning.	iv. 5 out of the throne proceed lightnings.
i. 18 full of eyes round about (cp. x. 12).	iv. 8 full of eyes round about (cp. iv. 6 full of eyes before and behind).
i. 22 like the colour of the terrible crystal.	iv. 6 like unto crystal.
i. 24 like the noise of great waters (cp. xliii. 2 his voice was like the sound of many waters).	i. 15 his voice as the voice of many waters; cp. xiv. 2 a voice...as the voice of many waters; xix. 6 the voice...as the voice of many waters.
i. 26 a likeness as the appearance of a man (cp. Gk of viii. 2).	i. 13 one like unto a son of man.
i. 28 as the appearance of the bow (i.e. the rainbow). when I saw it I fell.	iv. 3 a rainbow round about the throne; cp. x. 1 the rainbow. i. 17 when I saw him I fell.
ii. 8 eat that I give thee (i.e. a roll of a book).	x. 9 eat it up (i.e. the little book).
ii. 9, 10 an hand...a roll of a book was therein...it was written within and without.	v. 1 in the right hand...a book written within and on the back.
iii. 1–3 eat...thy belly....Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.	x. 9, 10 eat...thy belly...I...ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey.
vii. 2 the four corners of the earth.	vii. 1 the four corners of the earth (so xx. 8).
ix. 4 a mark upon the foreheads.	vii. 3 on their foreheads; cp. ix. 4

Ezekiel.	Revelation.
	the seal of God on their foreheads, xiv. 1: xxii. 4.
ix. 11 (Gk) clothed with his garment down to the foot, and girt about the loins with his girdle, cp. ix. 2 (Gk).	i. 13 clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.
xiv. 21 the sword and the famine and the noisome beasts and the pestilence (cp. v. 12: xxix. 5: xxxiv. 28).	vi. 8 with sword, and with famine, and with death (R.V. *marg.* pestilence), and by the wild beasts of the earth.
xxvi. 13 the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard (cp. Gk).	xviii. 22 the voice of harpers...shall be heard no more at all in thee.
xxvi. 21 shalt thou never be found again.	xviii. 21 and shall be found no more at all.
xxvii. 9 the ships of the sea.	xviii. 19 their ships in the sea.
xxvii. 29–33 the mariners... shall cry...and shall cast dust upon their heads...and they shall weep...with bitter mourning.	xviii. 17–19 mariners...they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning.
xxviii. 13 sardius...topaz...beryl... jasper...sapphire...emerald.	iv. 3 jasper...sardius...emerald.
	xxi. 19, 20 jasper...sapphire... emerald...sardius...beryl...topaz.
xxxi. 8 any tree in the garden of God.	ii. 7 the tree of life, which is in the Paradise (R.V. *marg.* garden) of God.
xxxiv. 23 He shall be their shepherd.	vii. 17 the Lamb...shall be their shepherd.
xxxiv. 24 I the Lord will be their God; cp. xxxvii. 27 My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.	xxi. 3 the tabernacle of God is with men...and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
xxxvii. 9 the four winds.	vii. 1 the four winds of the earth.
xxxvii. 10 (cp. 5) the breath came into them and they lived, and stood up upon their feet.	xi. 11 the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet.
xxxviii. 2 Gog...Magog.	xx. 8 Gog and Magog.
xxxviii. 22 and with blood...great hailstones, fire and brimstone.	viii. 7 hail and fire mingled with blood.
	xiv. 10 fire and brimstone (cp. xx. 10: xxi. 8).
xxxix. 17, 18, 20 Speak unto the birds of every sort...Assemble yourselves and come; gather yourselves...a great sacrifice...	xix. 17, 18 saying to all the birds ...Come and be gathered together unto the great supper... that ye may eat the flesh of

Ezekiel.	Revelation.
that ye may eat flesh...Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty... the princes of the earth...horses ...mighty men...all men of war.	kings...and the flesh of mighty men...horses...all men.
xl. 2 In the visions of God brought he me...a very high mountain... a city.	xxi. 10 he carried me away in the spirit...a mountain great and high...the holy city.
xl. 3, 5 a measuring reed.	xi. 1 a reed like unto a rod... measure the temple (cp. xxi. 15).
xliii. 2 the earth shined with his glory.	xviii. 1 the earth was lightened with his glory.
xliii. 16 square in the four sides thereof.	xxi. 16 lieth foursquare.
xlvii. 1 waters issued out from under the threshold.	xxii. 1 a river of water...proceeding out of the throne.
xlvii. 12 the waters thereof issue out of the sanctuary.	
xlvii. 12 (cp. 7) by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow every tree for meat...it shall bring forth new fruit every month...and the leaf thereof (shall be) for healing.	xxii. 2 on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life,... yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
xlviii. 31–34 the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel; three gates northward...and at the east side...three gates...and at the south side...three gates...at the west side three gates.	xxi. 10–13 the holy city...having twelve gates...and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.
xlviii. 35 the name of the city.	iii. 12 the name of the city.

Note.

In this connection it may be mentioned that very little trace of Ezekiel's prophecies is to be found in the rest of the books of the New Testament[1].

[1] The following comparisons of language may be made:—ii. 1 with Acts xxvi. 16; ix. 6 with 1 Pet. iv. 17; xi. 19, xxxvi. 26 with 2 Cor. iii. 3; xii. 2 with Mk viii. 18; xvii. 23 with Mk iv. 32; xx. 41 with Eph. v. 2, Phil. iv. 18;

It is probable but not certain that the words in 2 Cor. vi. 16 'I will be their God, and they shall be my people,' part of a sentence introduced by the expression 'as God said,' are a quotation from Ezek. xxxvii. 27 (cp. however, Ex. vi. 7 and other passages); but there is no other actual quotation from our book. Whether this had any connection with the fact that in some Jewish circles the canonicity of the book was disputed is doubtful.

It might have been expected that the apocalyptic portions of the Apocrypha, and especially 2 Esdras, would shew an acquaintance with Ezekiel. The nearest approaches to it are 2 Esdr. xiv. 38 compared with Ezek. ii. 8, and 2 Esdr. ii. 34 with Ezek. xxxiv. 23; and the 'precious stones' and gold of Ezek. xxviii. 13 and Tob. xiii. 16, 17.

9. Ezekiel and the Book of Common Prayer. This book is read in ordinary course on two Sundays and part of another in the year.

	Mattins.	Evensong.
18th Sunday after Trinity		ii. or xiii. to *v.* 17.
19th „ „	xiv.	xviii. or xxiv. *v.* 15.
20th „ „	xxxiv.	xxxvii.

and portions of it are read in the daily lessons from August 27 to Sept. 13 (inclusive).

In addition to this, on Whitsunday one of the alternative evening lessons is Ezek. xxxvi. *v.* 25, with its allusions to the 'new spirit'; on Tuesday in Easter Week at Evensong Ezek. xxxvii. to *v.* 15 is read with its description of the resurrection in the valley of dry bones; on St Mark's day Ezek. i. to *v.* 15, part of Ezekiel's vision of the 'four living creatures' often interpreted typically of the four Evangelists; and on St Peter's day Ezek. iii. *v.* 4 to *v.* 15, the mission of the prophet to the rebellious house of Israel.

Lastly, the sentence very often heard at the commencement of Morning and Evening Prayer and standing first of all is taken from our prophet (xviii. 27):—

'When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.'

xxviii. 2 with 2 Th. ii. 4; xxxiv. 2, 8, 10 with Jude 12; xxxiv. 5 with Mt. ix. 36, Mk vi. 34; xxxiv. 16 with Lk. xix. 10; xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24 with John x. 16; xxxvii. 26 with Heb. xiii. 20.

THE THEOLOGY OF EZEKIEL.

Ezekiel's position as a religious teacher is in some respects far in advance of those who preceded him. It will be well therefore to try to estimate what that position was in order to realise his presentation of religion to his fellow-countrymen around him. This is best done by considering various aspects of that religion.

(*a*) *Ezekiel's idea of God.* It may be useful first of all to consider his use of the names of God. The following are the names that occur in this book; the figures after the names represent the number of occurrences of each:—

El (2), Elohim (22), Elohe-Israel (7), El-Shaddai (1), Shaddai (1), Adonai (4), Jehovah (209), Jehovah Elohim with a possessive suffix attached to Elohim (8), Adonai Jehovah, Jehovah bearing in the Hebrew the vowel points of Elohim (217).

These are represented in the English by the following names:—

God, God, the God of Israel, God Almighty, the Almighty, the Lord, the LORD, the LORD your (their) God, the Lord GOD.

It is obvious at once how very seldom Ezekiel uses the generic term El or Elohim by itself. Like all writers before him, he presupposes the existence of God, a God apart from nature, but exhibiting his power in and through the control of the operations of nature. The form Elohim is plural, and is what is called the plural of majesty, but, though plural in form, the Hebrew writers did not as a rule recognize that it was a plural, and it is followed most frequently by a singular verb.

This God is defined further by the prophet as El-Shaddai, God Almighty[1]. The actual meaning of the word Shaddai is very uncertain. The earliest interpretation we have of it is that of the LXX and of Jewish writers who analyse the word and make it mean 'He Who is sufficient,' perhaps intending thereby 'He Who is sufficient in Himself to do everything for all men.' In the Pentateuch God is said to have revealed himself to Abram as El-Shaddai, and this points to the antiquity of the name, even though the passages in which it occurs are assigned to one of the later sources of the Pentateuch (P).

A limitation of the universality of the title Elohim is also

[1] In one of the two places in which Shaddai occurs El is omitted.

indicated in a few passages where we meet with the expression 'the God of Israel' (first in viii. 4). This carries us back to the name El-elohe-Israel (Gen. xxxiii. 20), and marks off the Elohim Whom Israel worshipped from the Elohim of other countries and nations. This God of theirs they knew as Jehovah, a name which their Tôrah declared to have been revealed to them immediately before the Exodus as the name of their covenant God. At first this name was used as a distinctive name. We may say that, to begin with, the Jewish religion was monolatrous not monotheistic, that is to say they worshipped Jehovah alone, but believed that the gods of the heathen also had a real existence. This is implied by the use of the name Jehovah followed by an interpretative Elohim with a possessive suffix added to it, Jehovah your Elohim, their Elohim and so on, thus identifying Jehovah with the Elohim of their own people. This use of the two names is especially noticeable in Deuteronomy but occurs a few times in Ezekiel. The next stage of advance was to believe in the superiority of the Hebrew God to all the gods of other peoples. So Jethro is represented as saying:—'Now I know that Jehovah is greater than all gods' (Ex. xviii. 11), and this passage is assigned to one of the earliest sources of the Pentateuch. The last stage is reached when Jehovah is declared to be the only God, and all other gods no gods at all; we find, for instance, Jeremiah speaking of 'gods, which yet are no gods' (ii. 11). Much earlier than this we have in Ps. xviii., ascribed to David, the words 'Who is God, save Jehovah?' This idea gradually prevailed more and more amongst the people, till with the lessons of the exile behind them the whole people became strict monotheists. By the time that St Paul lived and wrote, he could say 'no idol is anything in this world...there is no God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God...the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God.' (1 Cor. viii. 4–6, x. 20.)

In Ezekiel's days the turning-point for the nation had arrived, and no prophet is sterner in his denunciation of all idolatry and especially of the false worships that went on even in the temple courts—the image of jealousy, the idolatrous decoration of the walls, the women weeping for Tammuz, the worshippers of the sun

(Ezek. viii.). The constant refrain of the whole book, repeated in almost identical form at least sixty times, is 'Ye shall know that I am Jehovah.'

The most frequent use of the name Jehovah by Ezekiel is in combination with the name Adonai, rendered Lord GOD. Those who notice minutiae in printing will have remarked that there must be some difference in the Hebrew between this title and that of 'LORD God' in the section of the Pentateuch, Gen. ii. 4–iii. 24. There the Hebrew is Jehovah Elohim; here it is Adonai Jehovah. Literally the latter title means my Lord Jehovah, but Adonai has come to be used as a proper name. In many cases it would seem that, owing to the intense reverence paid to the name Jehovah, which was called the incommunicable Name[1], this name Adonai has first of all been noted in the margin of the manuscripts in order to be substituted for it in public reading and then has crept into the text. Occasionally we find Adonai by itself (four or perhaps five times in this prophet, but most often in Isaiah and Lamentations). It can be detected in the R.V. by the printing Lord (*not* LORD). In the four certain passages (xviii. 25, 29: xxxiii. 17, 20) it occurs in a popular saying, 'The way of the Lord is not equal.' Such a saying would certainly not include the tetragrammaton Jehovah. The idea conveyed by the title is that of Lord of lords:—'Jehovah your God, He is God of gods, and Lord of lords' (Deut. x. 17).

Such being the titles given to God in this book what are the contents of Ezekiel's idea of God? He is a God outside the universe such as the prophet knew it, but yet ordering and guiding all its affairs. He is a God surrounded by glory and such glory that any analysis of the appearance of the personal God is past the power of human language to express with anything approaching to accuracy. As a rule the prophet only describes the surrounding glory, though once he speaks of 'a likeness as the appearance of a man' upon the throne, and of the loins of the figure, but that is all and is very indefinite. It may indeed be included under the anthropomorphic language of the O.T. For Ezekiel, God has a real existent personality, He is all-powerful, He can determine the fate not only of His own people but of all the nations of the earth, He can use as instruments of His wrath and justice the sword, fire, famine

[1] See Levit. xxiv. 11 and cp. Wisd. xiv. 21 for 'the incommunicable Name.'

and pestilence. By the use of the archaic name Shaddai, Ezekiel indicates his belief in the omnipotence of his God, a belief which made it possible for him to look upon the heathen nations as used by God as His instruments. 'Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against thee' (xxvi. 3). This omnipotence of God is *the* one of His attributes upon which the prophet lays especial stress.

Under the expression 'the name of God,' the prophet sums up his ideas of what God essentially is. That name must not be profaned (xx. 39); what God wrought was 'for His name's sake,' to prevent its profanation (xx. 9, 14, 22, 44: xxxvi. 20); the pity which He would shew to Israel was to be exercised for the same reason (xxxvi. 21, 22) and not for their sakes; in the coming time that name was to be known and had in honour by Israel (xxxvi. 23: xxxix. 7, 22); here we may say that 'name' is almost equivalent to 'glory'; and in the future God will be jealous (i.e. zealous) for the honour of His holy name (xxxix. 25).

The very fact that Ezekiel constantly denounces idol worship of all sorts proves that his God is a spiritual God. On the one side he is firmly convinced that God demands of His servants a material worship. Ezekiel cannot conceive of a service of God without a Temple and worship accompanied by ritual and material offerings and sacrifices. This is shewn by the ideal which he sets before the people in the last chapters of his prophecies. That worship must be a purified worship far different from the degraded forms of worship which had found their way even into the Temple at Jerusalem immediately before its destruction, yet none the less it is to be material. But, apart from that, the individual is also to be actuated and inspired by the Spirit of God (xxxvi. 27: xxxvii. 14), which will give him a new life. In fact we may put it in this way, that as the Temple is to speak to him of Jehovah outside himself, and of His abiding presence with His people (xlviii. 35), so the Spirit implanted in him will speak of Jehovah abiding within him, and using through it His power and influence upon man's life and conversation, even to the extent of raising him from spiritual death to spiritual life (xxxvii. 1–14). It was the need of this deliverance and emancipation that pressed with great force upon the prophet's mind. The people were in a parlous state, they could not deliver

themselves, they were full of iniquity, and so they needed a deliverer who should lead them into the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake. This was a spiritual work and could only be done by the Spirit of God. Till this was effected Jehovah's Name was profaned (xxxvi. 20) by His own peculiar people in the midst of the nations amongst whom they were scattered. But when that profanation ceased, then the sanctification of His Name by His own people, His recognition as 'the Holy One in Israel' (xxxix. 7), would lead to His being acknowledged by other nations as well, and to their confessing Him to be their God.

(*b*) *Man and man's sinfulness.* Ezekiel's ideas about God may not be very much in advance of those who had gone before him. It is under the present heading that we find most progress of thought especially with regard to man's individual responsibility. He exposes the false interpretation that had been put upon the last part of the second commandment, as illustrated by the popular proverb 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge' (xviii. 2)[1]. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die'—that is the keynote to all his teaching. And here we may note that Ezekiel recognises both soul and spirit as constituent elements in men. If we try to analyse their respective functions, it is difficult to define them accurately, but we may say that the soul is the mainspring of action, the spirit is the source of motive, and, in the case of the righteous man, is a new spirit, implanted by God, so that righteous acts and the regenerate life are inspired by Him. It becomes a new life, as it were, such as is described in Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones.

To return, then, to the subject of sin. The Hebrew word for sin, just like the Greek word, implies the missing of the mark aimed at, a divergence from what is straight, or, to use rather a different form of expression, a failure to come up to a standard, that standard of course being the revealed will of God. Sin, therefore, is something done against God, it may be also against one's fellow-man. It is this latter aspect of sin upon which great stress is laid in those two chapters of Ezekiel (xviii., xxxiii.) which are occupied with the problems of sin. At the same time the sinner places himself in opposition to God by his sin, and therefore puts himself under the

[1] This proverb is also quoted by Jeremiah (xxxi. 29).

sentence of death, but still there is a remedy if he will but turn from sin. So far as is consistent with God's perfect justice, He does not desire that one sinner should die (xviii. 30–32). But, if he goes on in sin, he only is responsible and must expect the due reward of his deeds: but in virtue of his free will he can make a free choice between good and evil; he is not bound down to sin.

Another point which we may very well notice here is that to Ezekiel the people, as a whole, had by their own fault lost their unique relation to Jehovah. They had been taken into covenant with Him, but they had broken that covenant, and were therefore outcasts. But he looks forward to a time when a new covenant shall be made to take the place of the old; of this new covenant the leading features will be that it will indicate a reconciliation between God and His people; it will be a covenant of peace; and it will never be broken by either party to it; it will be an everlasting covenant. It will become a bond, binding them together indissolubly (xx. 37).

And the opposite to sin is righteousness. Righteousness is to Ezekiel not an abstraction but something concrete: it is made up of righteous acts, done in the sight of God and in accordance with the covenant between God and man. Motive is taken slight account of: the spirit of a law is still less opposed to its letter.

With reference to forgiveness and the new life of the redeemed it is interesting to notice, as is pointed out by the late Dr A. B. Davidson in his *Theology of the Old Testament* (p. 343), how exactly Ezekiel's doctrinal position anticipates that of St Paul. We cannot do better than quote his words. After citing parts of Ezek. xxxvi. 17–38 he continues:

'Probably no passage in the Old Testament offers so complete a parallel to New Testament doctrine, particularly to that of St Paul. Commentators complain that nobody reads Ezekiel now. It is not certain that St Paul read him, for he nowhere quotes him. But the redemptive conceptions of the two writers are the same, and appear in the same order: 1. Forgiveness—"I will sprinkle clean water upon you"; 2. Regeneration—"A new heart and spirit"; 3. The Spirit of God as the ruling power in the new life—"I will put My Spirit within you"; 4. The issue of this principle of life, the keeping of the requirements of God's law—"That the righteous-

ness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Rom. viii. 4)"; 5. The effect of living "under grace" in softening the human heart and leading to obedience—"Ye shall remember your evil ways and loathe yourselves"—"Shall we sin because not under law but under grace?" (Rom. vi., vii.). And, finally, the organic connection of Israel's history with Jehovah's revelation of Himself to the nations (Rom. xi.).'

(*c*) *Angels.* There is not much in this book that will help us as to any Jewish doctrine about angels. Their existence is assumed, as elsewhere in the Old Testament. The cherubim form part of the visions of the prophet as ministering to the Divine glory, especially in the Temple, in which were figures of the 'cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat.' No doubt, too, Ezekiel, when he mentions 'the voice of one that spake' at the end of his first vision, and the 'man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass' who was the measurer of the ideal temple and his guide concerning it, wishes us to think of both these beings as angels. Like St John in the Apocalypse he is inclined to worship the first of these, but is bidden to stand upon his feet. But beyond this the prophet gives us little information.

(*d*) *Ezekiel's Day of the Lord.* There are in the Old Testament many varied conceptions of what is called 'the day of the Lord.' To Ezekiel it was to be an end, that is, an end of the state of things as they were in his time. This 'end' would be accompanied by destruction and devastation not only for the Jewish people but also for heathen nations. It was to be an outpouring of God's wrath upon the world with the certainty of a better state of things to follow. Whether the day was to be actually the same day for all alike, Jew and Gentile, is not clear; the one definite idea in the prophet's mind was that it was close at hand and was to take the form of a universal judgement. The proverbial saying of the day, 'The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth,' as well as the common Jewish notion that Ezekiel's prophecies looked forward to a distant future, were alike to be falsified. The performance of what had been foretold was imminent.

(*e*) *Life after death.* To Ezekiel there is one place, Sheol or Hades, whither all go, good and bad alike, at death. It is a great receptacle where the individual's personality is maintained, but yet

existence there is of a very shadowy character. It is mentioned by the prophet especially in connection with the overthrow of the heathen nations (xxxi., xxxii.). Some of the inhabitants 'of the baser sort' occupy a more distant position on the edge of the receptacle than seems to be assigned to others (xxxii. 23). The vision of the Valley of Dry Bones implies, if it does not actually assert, the belief of the prophet in a Life to come and a Resurrection, even though his immediate use of it is to prophesy a national resurrection. We cannot imagine it otherwise if we remember what stress the prophet lays upon the individual, the individual's life and individual responsibility.

(*f*) *Ezekiel's Messianic Ideas.* These mainly take the form of a revival of religion and of prosperity among the Jews. The former is indicated by the 'new heart' and the 'new spirit.' But of a personal Saviour or Redeemer there is very little trace. The main idea is of a prince, a new David (xxxiv. 23: xxxvii. 24, 25), who is to be their prince for ever, unless we understand by this expression that a new Davidic dynasty is to be set up. Whether this David is identical with the first king of Judah, in the prophet's mind, is a little uncertain; it seems probable that he is; but there is nothing divine about him. All the work of regeneration and the establishment of the new King is the direct work of Jehovah. In one other passage there seems to be a distinct reference to what is generally held to be a Messianic passage in Genesis (xlix. 10):

> 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
> Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
> Until Shiloh come;
> And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.'

The words of the prophet are (xxi. 27): 'This also shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him.' For the meaning of this passage, we would refer to the notes on it. Beyond this there is but little to inform us of Ezekiel's views about a coming Messianic Deliverer.

THE CONDITION OF THE JEWS IN THE TIME OF EZEKIEL.

It is well to try to consider before reading Ezekiel's prophecies what exactly was the condition of the people during the twenty years covered by the prophecies of this book (592–570 B.C.). We are fortunate in possessing not only the prophecies of this book but also some contemporaneous parts of Jeremiah (xxi., xxxii.–xxxv., xxxviii.–xliv., lii. 4–34), beside the narrative of 2 Kings xxv. Daniel and perhaps Obadiah were also prophets of this period.

At the date when the book of Ezekiel opens, the Captivity had already really begun. For many years Egypt and Babylon, each from its own quarter, had been pressing upon the kingdom of Judah, and Pharaoh-necoh had more than once invaded the land, on one occasion carrying his march onwards as far as to the river Euphrates (2 K. xxiii. 29). This was the last occasion on which the Egyptian king was able to send his troops so far. They were defeated at the battle of Carchemish (to-day Jerabis on the Euphrates), Jer. xlvi. 2. It was in the course of Pharaoh-necoh's march to Carchemish that Josiah was slain at the battle of Megiddo. The battle of Carchemish actually took place in Jehoiakim's reign. From that time the Egyptian power was driven back. Jehoiakim himself was a vassal of Pharaoh-necoh, set up by him, but, at the end of the eleven years of his reign it could be said that 'the king of Babylon had taken, from the brook of Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt' (2 K. xxiv. 7). In the latter part of his reign, Jehoiakim was for three years (2 K. xxiv. 1) tributary to Nebuchadrezzar, and, on his rebellion at the end of this time, the Captivity may be said to have begun. It is not clear whether Jehoiakim was actually deported; probably he was not (2 K. xxiv. 6), though preparations may have been made, if we accept the Chronicler's statement, for such a deportation (2 Chr. xxxvi. 6). He was succeeded by his son Jehoiachin, known to Jeremiah as Jeconiah or Coniah. The great deportation from Jerusalem took place at the end of his short reign of three months, when the Temple was spoiled and all the picked men amongst the inhabitants of the land were carried away: 'none remained, save the poorest

sort of the people of the land' (2 K. xxv. 14: cp. Jer. xxiv. 1, xxix. 2). It was in this deportation that Ezekiel was carried off to Babylon: Jeremiah remained in Jerusalem: communication was, however, continued between the exiles and those still remaining in the land. Jeremiah wrote a letter and sent a message to them of the captivity, and Shemaiah, a false prophet, sent letters from Babylon to Jerusalem, claiming to have been appointed priest by Jehovah and to be a prophet (Jer. xxix.). To finish our outline of the history, Mattaniah, Jehoiakim's brother, was set up as the vassal king with the name of Zedekiah by Nebuchadrezzar and reigned eleven years. But he was a recalcitrant vassal, and seems to have been urged on to rebellion by Pharaoh-necoh's successor, Pharaoh-hophra. The approach of the Egyptian caused a temporary withdrawal of the Babylonian army from before Jerusalem, but that was all. The final destruction followed, and city and temple were alike burnt and sacked by the Babylonians, whilst the king was carried off to Babylon with some of his subjects, and this time a governor, not a king, was left in charge of those that still remained. After a few months the governor, Gedaliah, who had set up his government at Mizpah, was assassinated, and a great number of the remnant went off to Egypt, carrying away with them Jeremiah the prophet, who had opposed their proceedings.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel then were contemporaries during this period, but exercising their prophetic office at a distance from one another, the one in Jerusalem, the other in Babylonia, though the latter describes his revelations and visions of what was going on in Jerusalem. We naturally, therefore, look to Jeremiah to tell us more particularly about the political life of the Jews of his day, for political life did not exist for the captives. So long as they kept the peace, these latter were allowed to dwell securely in the land and to carry on their own occupations and even to hold land. Ezekiel, who dwelt among them, devotes his attention, in all his acts and utterances which deal with the Jews, to the spiritual state of his fellow-countrymen, and to the facts connected with the state of religious life in Jerusalem which made him see that the final destruction of city and temple had been all along inevitable.

Jerusalem was a city divided against itself in more ways than one. Politically, there were two great parties in the city. The one

relied upon Egypt, the other looked rather to making terms with Babylon. The majority in Zedekiah's reign, notwithstanding the curtailment that had taken place of the Egyptian power a little while before, still cast longing eyes towards Egypt for help. Isaiah (xxx., xxxi.) had already insisted upon the futility of relying upon Egypt in Hezekiah's reign, and Ezekiel, apparently with the recollection of the words attributed to Rabshakeh (2 K. xviii. 21, Is. xxxvi. 6 'thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt'), speaks of the inhabitants of Egypt as having been 'a staff of reed to the house of Israel' (xxix. 6, 7). Jeremiah, who was in the thick of the political strife, did all he could to persuade Zedekiah that opposition to the Babylonian forces was useless. His writings are full of efforts in this direction (e.g. xxvii.). But it was all in vain, even when the false prophet Hananiah, who had prophesied a deliverance and a restoration from Babylon within two years, died within a few months in accordance with Jeremiah's prophecy (xxviii.). Zedekiah himself seems to have been a vacillating monarch, but the pro-Egyptian faction led by the princes terrorised him (xxxviii.), and brought about the prophet's imprisonment. So bitter was the feeling against the prophet that when, upon the withdrawal of the Babylonian army from before Jerusalem for a time, because of the advance of the Egyptian forces, he was starting for Anathoth to receive the produce of his estate there, he was arrested and imprisoned on the plea that he was intending to join the Babylonians (xxxvii.). With a weak king, and a city distracted in this way, it is no wonder that the siege came to such a termination as it did, and that, when a breach was at last made in its walls, Zedekiah and the leading people endeavoured to escape.

But this was not all: the spiritual state of Jerusalem at this time presents a very saddening aspect. Up to king Solomon's time, the idea of one central place of worship, such as the tabernacle had been, was in the minds of most of the people dormant: they made use of the high places that were in existence all over the country for their worship of Jehovah, and this was not likely to lead to the retention of a very pure form of worship. But in Solomon's days matters grew worse. Owing to his alliances, matrimonial and otherwise, heathen cults were not only tolerated but recognized side by side with the worship of Jehovah. This toleration of other

worships was allowed to continue all through the period of the kings, with very few exceptions. Hezekiah and Josiah made attempts to purge the land of its idolatrous worships, but their reformations had no lasting effect, and, even in their times, no restriction of sacrificial worship to the Temple at Jerusalem was attempted. In Solomon's time it had been the worship of Ashtoreth, Chemosh, and Molech; when Josiah attempted to carry out a reformation, we find mention of what we may call a complete pandemonium, including the worship of the sun, moon and stars, and, as Ezekiel tells us, that of Adonis (Tammuz) as well. The sacred rites attached to some of these worships brought with it prostitution on the part of both sexes as part of the service that was offered. The followers of all these heathen rites were gathered from the elders of the people. We read of seventy of them burning incense in a highly decorated chamber of false worship attached to the Temple itself (Ezek. viii. 11). The form of decoration was derived from Babylon (Ezek. xxiii. 14, 15).

With a vacillating monarch, a corrupt court, a people divided politically into two camps, one for Babylon, one for Egypt, a condition as to religion hopelessly disordered, with the worship of Israel's Jehovah purely formal, and scarcely holding its own in the midst of other and degraded worships, with prophet and false prophet contending against one another, we cannot be surprised at what happened, for it was inevitable. As Ezekiel sat by the waters of Babylon, as he thought of the departing glory of Jehovah and of His house, he could not help drawing the lessons he did from the impending completion of the ruin of his country[1]. It had come upon them not only in consequence of the errancy of the people as a whole. To him it was clear that each individual separately had his own responsibility in the matter. As the people, in their entirety, were to suffer for their corporate transgressions of Divine Law, so each individual, who did not turn from his own evil courses, would in due time meet with the due reward of his deeds. And, as the prophet took a wider survey of affairs, he sees that it is a universal law of Divine Providence, and that sooner or later Tyre,

[1] For a picture of the attitude of the Exiles in Babylon, see Ps. cxxxvii. 'By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion,' etc.

Babylon, Egypt, and other great powers in their turn will have to suffer for their pride and arrogancy and self-sufficiency, and to become what Jerusalem became during the prophet's ministry, an astonishment and a desolation. And thus we come to a truth which Ezekiel clearly saw and which has been well expressed in the statement that 'History is Jehovah operating for His Name's sake.'

It is a little difficult to form an estimate of the numbers that were carried off in the various deportations to Babylon. In the divided state of the Jews at the time when Ezekiel's prophecies begin it would be interesting to know what proportion of the Jewish inhabitants were left in Palestine, and what proportion were in Babylonia. The only data we have for forming any conjecture are (1) the number given in Ezra and Nehemiah of those who returned from the captivity to their own land, which amounted to 49,897 (49,952 Neh.), and these after all seem to have formed only a portion of the captives, for there were many who remained as permanent settlers and did not accompany the return; (2) the number of the captives in Jehoiachin's captivity, 11,000 or 18,000, according to the way in which we interpret 2 K. xxiv. 14, 16; (3) the figures of three deportations, 3023 + 832 + 745 = 4600, given in Jer. lii. 28–30, the first of which must have taken place in Jehoiachin's reign. It will, therefore, be evident that little can be gathered from these statements except a rough estimate of the Jewish population in Babylonia. If these figures are correct, their numbers must have increased with surprising rapidity during the years of exile. Those who remained in Babylonia after the Return also multiplied very rapidly, and centuries later one of the great centres of Rabbinical learning was to be found in that country and endured there almost into the middle ages (Abrahams, *Short History of Jewish Literature*, p. 22).

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET
EZEKIEL.

A. THE PROPHET'S FIRST VISION AND HIS CHARGE, B.C. 592. CHAPTERS I.—III. 15.

i. *The Introduction of the Prophet, with his first Vision.* i.

In considering this and the other visions of the Prophet, it is well to remember that we have in them an attempt to describe in human language, with all its imperfections, what to the prophet were visions of the Divine. That the language he used conveyed to him the impressions that were formed on his mind by the visions seems quite clear, for the language describing them is harmonious with itself, as we can see by a comparison in detail of the description here with that of chapter x. But we have not seen the visions, and therefore it is not to be wondered at if the impressions formed upon our minds by the language the prophet uses fail of definite clearness, and only give us vague ideas of the incomprehensible majesty and glory of God.

For the most notable attempt of Art to reproduce this vision, we may refer to the picture in the Pitti Palace at Florence, entitled "The Vision of Ezekiel," "which if not the work of Raphael's own pencil, is certainly a contemporary copy of the lost original" (Lanciani, *The Golden Days of the Renaissance in Rome*, p. 261).

I. 1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the month, as I was among

I. 1–3. In these verses there seems to be a double introduction of the prophet, by himself (1) and by some one else (2, 3); and the second may perhaps have originally preceded the first, or, more likely still, the second was introduced later as an explanation of the first. The chronology of the two passages is differently reckoned, in *v.* 1 we have 'the thirtieth year,' with no further explanation, in *v.* 2 'the fifth year

the [1]captives by the river Chebar, that the heavens were
2 opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth *day* of the
month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's
3 captivity, the word of the LORD came expressly unto
Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the
Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD
4 was there upon him. And I looked, and, behold, a stormy

[1] Heb. *captivity*.

of King Jehoiachin's captivity.' We have 'the sixth year' and 'the seventh year' mentioned in viii. 1, xx. 1. If the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity (cp. 2 K. xxiv. 12, 15) be taken as B.C. 592, the thirtieth year can scarcely be reckoned backward from that, for it would then fall about the time of Nabopolassar's accession to the throne of Babylon and of the discovery of the Book of the Law (2 K. xxiii.). The thirtieth year is much more probably that year in the prophet's life. He was a priest, and the ministrations of the priest began at that age (Numb. iv. 3 etc.). The captivity referred to was the first deportation of captives to Babylonia, four years before the Fall of Jerusalem (cf. Introd. p. xxxviii).

1. *the river Chebar*] The prophet is at once introduced as one of the captives by the river Chebar in the land of the Chaldeans. Chebar was the name of one of the large irrigating canals of Babylonia, and a place called Tel-abib (iii. 15) stood upon it. With the opening of the heavens we may compare the Baptism of our Lord when at the time that He 'was about thirty years of age' (Lk. iii. 23) 'the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God' (Matt. iii. 16), as well as the martyrdom of St Stephen (Acts vii. 56) and the Apocalypse (Rev. xix. 11). 'Visions of God' (viii. 3: xl. 2) and 'the hand of the Lord was there upon him (me)' (iii. 22 etc.) are characteristic expressions of Ezekiel. The latter almost invariably leads up to the account of a vision. It implies directing power and the giving of more than human power to him upon whom the hand was laid. We may connect with this the name of the prophet—Yeḥezkêl, i.e. God strengtheneth.

3. *Ezekiel the priest*] The prophet is described as a priest, the son of Buzi. The name Buzi is more like a generic name than a personal one and does not occur anywhere else in the Bible in connection with the priestly tribe.

4–28. THE FIRST VISION. It is, of course, impossible to depict exactly what the vision was which the prophet saw. The vision, however, came forth from a cloud-storm and was one of brightness out of which emerged four mysterious living creatures with four faces and four wings, with their relative positions towards one another always remaining the same. Combined with them and close to them were the wheels which gave

wind came out of the north, a great cloud, with a fire

the idea of motion and that motion directed by the spirit of each living creature. Superimposed upon this and above the firmament was the throne with an anthropomorphic divine form surrounded by an appearance like a rainbow. This represented to the prophet the presence of the glory of the LORD Who called him to his work and office. The Son of Sirach calls it 'the vision of glory which God shewed him upon the chariot of the cherubim' (Ecclus. xlix. 8).

This vision occurs four times in Ezekiel; see iii. 22, viii. 4, xliii. 4. It was a vision of the God who was about to remove His presence from His temple at Jerusalem, and was afterwards to fill a new Temple, idealized by Ezekiel in the last chapters of this book, with His glory—a glory that was to be greater than the former glory (cp. Hag. ii. 7, 9).—This will explain much that is obscure: it shews us the God of judgment coming from the north in the storm; but at the same time coming with mercy in human form (thus an Incarnation of the divine is alluded to), and walking upon the earth in such a way that His Kingdom spreads in every direction. He is pointed out as identical with Him Who, to the Jews, sitteth between the cherubim (Ps. lxxx. 1) which are the living creatures of this chapter (see x. 1). In these living creatures is the fulness of life, represented by their four faces, whilst at the same time they are spiritual beings. They are dominated by the Spirit of the Living God Whose searching eye (i. 18) sees everything everywhere. This presence of the God-Man (*v.* 26) with His people is to endure for ever in the new Temple in which He takes up His abode.

No doubt the form which the vision took was suggested to Ezekiel by the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat of the tabernacle and the temple at Jerusalem, and also by the wonderful winged creatures which guarded the temples and palaces of Babylonia. The wheels we may perhaps take as an emblem of the eternity of all things divine.

It is further to be noticed how much of the apocalyptic imagery of the New Testament is due to the influence of these visions of Ezekiel. The four living creatures appear there (Rev. iv. 6–9). Their feet sparkling 'like the colour of burnished brass' (*v.* 7) have their counterpart in the feet of the son of man, 'like unto burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace' (Rev. i. 15: ii. 18: cp. Ezek. xl. 3: Dan. x. 6). The 'rings full of eyes round about' (*v.* 18) recall the living creatures 'full of eyes before and behind,' 'round about and within' (Rev. iv. 6, 8). The firmament corresponds with 'the glassy sea' (Rev. iv.); 'a likeness as the appearance of a man' with 'one like unto a son of man' (Rev. i. 15). The rainbow (i. 28) also appears in Rev. iv. 3. Between the two stand the apocalyptic visions of Daniel (vii. 9–14: x. 4–6). For a fuller account of the use of Ezekiel by later writers see Introd. pp. xxv–xxix.

4. *the north*] It was from the north that the Israelites had suffered invasion, and their invaders

[1]infolding itself, and a brightness round about it, and out of the midst thereof [2]as the colour of [3]amber, out of the
5 midst of the fire. And out of the midst thereof came the

[1] Or, *flashing continually* [2] Or, *as amber to look upon* [3] Or, *electrum*

had been the instruments of the judgment of God. It was in the north, too, that the Babylonian placed the abode of his gods (Is. xiv. 13). This may have partly influenced the prophet in the choice of the north as the quarter from which the vision came, and may also be taken to imply the departure of God from that city in which visible tokens of His presence had been seen. The expression 'a fire infolding itself,' translated more correctly in the margin 'a fire flashing continually' had its origin in Ex. ix. 24 (see R.V. *margin* there).

amber] The Hebrew word representing amber (*marg.* electrum) is one of doubtful meaning. Electrum (ἤλεκτρον) may mean either amber or a metal compounded of gold and silver. The word is used also in *v.* 27 and viii. 2. In each case reference is made only to colour or outward appearance.

5–14. THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES. These creatures must be identical with the cherubim of cap. x. The details of the two chapters should be carefully compared. Their wings must therefore have covered their arms. *V.* 8 *b*, which some would omit, really attaches the following words to *v.* 7. However difficult we may find it to picture these visions to ourselves, the prophet is consistent in his descriptions. In both *v.* 5 *b* and *v.* 10 it is implied that the face of a man was in front of the prophet as he gazed upon the vision. In *v.* 11, which must be compared with *v.* 23, some critics wish to leave out the words 'And their faces,' but it scarcely seems necessary to do so. The words imply that each face had a separate junction with the body. In *v.* 12 (cp. *v.* 9 *c*: x. 22 *b*) the spirit is not the wind of *v.* 4, but the spirit of the living creature (cp. *vv.* 20, 21: x. 17), and it is implied that all the four faces looked in the same direction. In *v.* 13 the reading of the Septuagint in the margin furnishes the better sense. The language of *vv.* 13, 14 recalls the appearances at the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai (cp. also Ps. xviii. 12). Some wish to omit *v.* 14, following one form of the Greek version. These four creatures, like the four streams of Eden, were afterwards taken as emblems of the four Evangelists (cp. Westcott's *Introd. to the Study of the Gospels*, cap. iv., for a fuller treatment of the subject). The Church directs attention to this by appointing i. 1–14 as one of the lessons on St Mark's day.

There are several ethical ideas conveyed by the manner of motion as it is described here. There is directness of purpose, 'they turned not when they went'; there is intensity of action, 'they went every one straightforward'; and there is obedience to the impulse of the spirit, 'the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.' No doubt this moral aspect of the vision

likeness of four living creatures. And this was their
6 appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every
one had four faces, and every one of them had four wings.
7 And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their
feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled
8 like the colour of burnished brass. And they had the
hands of a man under their wings on their four sides:
9 and they four had their faces and their wings *thus*; their
wings were joined one to another; they turned not when
10 they went; they went every one straight forward. As for
the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man;
and they four had the face of a lion on the right side;
and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they
11 four had also the face of an eagle. [1]And their faces and
their wings were separate above; two *wings* of every one
were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.
12 And they went every one straight forward: whither the
spirit was to go, they went; they turned not when they
13 went. [2]As for the likeness of the living creatures, their
appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appear-
ance of torches; it went up and down among the living
creatures: and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went
14 forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned
15 as the appearance of a flash of lightning. Now as I beheld

[1] Or, *And* thus were *their faces; and their wings were &c.*
[2] The Sept. has, *And in the midst of the living creatures was an appearance &c.*

helped to suggest the mystical interpretation of it as applicable to the four Evangelists.

15–21. THE WHEELS AND MOVEMENT OF THE LIVING CREATURES (cp. x. 6, 9–13, 16, 17, 19: xi. 22). The 'beryl' (*v.* 16) represents a Hebrew word of very doubtful meaning, as appears from the renderings of the Sept. (*θαρσεῖς*) and Vulg. (*maris* i.e. the sea) and the various alternatives suggested in the margin of the R.V. (see Ex. xxviii. 20: Cant. v. 14: Ezek. x. 16). The 'wheel within a wheel' can only imply two wheels at right angles to one another. In *v.* 18 R.V. *margin* 'felloes' (cp. 1 Kings vii. 33) makes the meaning of the passage clearer. In *v.* 20*a* some words seem to have been written twice unintentionally. The verse should read:—Whithersoever the spirit was to go, the wheels went: and they were lifted beside

the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of the four faces
16 thereof. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as
17 it were a wheel [1]within a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four sides: they turned not when they
18 went. As for their [2]rings, they were high and dreadful; and they four had their rings full of eyes round about.
19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them: and when the living creatures were lifted
20 up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went; thither was the spirit to go: and the wheels were lifted up [3]beside them; for the spirit [4]of the living creature was in the wheels.
21 When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up [3]beside them: for the
22 spirit [4]of the living creature was in the wheels. And

[1] Heb. *in the midst of.* [2] Or, *felloes* [3] Or, *over against* [4] Or, *of life*

them: for the Spirit of the living creature (R.V. *marg.* 'of life' is certainly wrong) was in the wheels.

22–28. THE FIRMAMENT AND THE THRONE. These appear again in chapter x. By the firmament is meant something like the blue vault of the clear sky (Gen. i. 6): the description here recalls that of Ex. xxiv. 10. The marginal 'ice' for 'crystal' has little to recommend it. The description of the wings in this passage must be taken with that in *v.* 11. They were straight like the feet (*v.* 7). Their arrangement is different from that of the wings in Isaiah's vision (vi. 2). Here it is implied that they appeared to hold up the firmament. The similes of *v.* 24 are generally applied to the voice of the Almighty Himself (see x. 5): the Sept. omits the words 'like the voice...an host.' 'Almighty' is the translation of the word Shaddai, which occurs as a name of God first in Gen. xvii. 1 (R.V. *margin*). The Name is one for which no satisfactory explanation has as yet been given. 'My rock' or 'my Lord' are two of the meanings which have been assigned to it. The Greek translator of Job, where the name occurs most frequently, evidently considered it to mean 'He who is sufficient' (cf. Driver's *Genesis*, Excursus I. p. 404 and see Introd. p. xxx). The last clause of *v.* 25 is omitted by

over the head of the living creature there was the likeness of a firmament, like the colour of the terrible [1]crystal, 23 stretched forth over their heads above. And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two which covered [2]on this side, and every one had two which covered [2]on that side, their 24 bodies. And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a noise of tumult like the noise of an host: 25 when they stood, they let down their wings. And there was a voice above the firmament that was over their 26 heads: when they stood, they let down their wings. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the 27 appearance of a man upon it above. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of his loins and upward; and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness 28 round about [3]him. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

[1] Or, *ice* [2] Or, *for them* [3] Or, *it*

many as an accidental repetition from *v.* 24. With *v.* 26 we must compare x. 1. The 'sapphire stone' occurs in the same connection in Ex. xxiv. 10. 'The glory of the Lord' (*v.* 28) is also seen in Ex. xxiv. 16, and the expression occurs many times in the account of Ezekiel's visions (cp. iii. 23: viii. 4: ix. 3: x. 4, 18, 19: xi. 22, 23: xliii. 4, 5: xliv. 4).

It is the sense of this Divine glory that causes the prophet to prostrate himself before it, in a state of expectancy and attention. At the same time the mysterious character of the 'one that spake' lends solemnity to the coming call.

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ii. *The Prophet's Call and Mission.* ii. 1–iii. 3.

II. 1 And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy
2 feet, and I will speak with thee. And the spirit entered
into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet;
3 and I heard him that spake unto me. And he said unto

II. 1–III. 2. Following upon the introductory vision, the call and mission of the prophet with his first symbolic action are described.

II. 1, 2. The prophet is addressed here and constantly throughout the book as Son of Man. It is his distinctive title, only applied in the Old Testament once besides, perhaps in imitation of this use, to a prophet (Dan. viii. 17). What the title as applied to the prophet exactly indicates is not absolutely certain. To some it appears merely to imply the immeasurable distance there is between even a chosen prophet of God and Jehovah: whilst by others it is held to connote as well the dignity of the human agent (cp. Ps. viii. 5). It seems scarcely in harmony with its surroundings in this book to look upon it simply as a title of depreciation. This is the more to be observed when we remember that the title which our Lord uses most frequently for Himself is that of '*the* Son of Man,' perhaps looking back to Dan. vii. 13:—'there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man.' For a fuller discussion of the phrase see the article *Son of Man* in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iv. and Introduction, p. xiii.

The prophet is called upon to rise and stand upon his feet as a mark of God's confidence in him, just as Daniel is bidden to do in similar circumstances, though in his case the words 'I stood trembling' (x. 11) follow. It is to be noted that the word spoken brings with it the inward inspiration, and that the strength to stand in the presence of the 'one that spake' is attributed to the Spirit just as it is in iii. 24. Thus the action of the Spirit of God and of the word of God is as closely united as in the account of the Creation (Gen. i. 2, 3). Man cannot fulfil God's word without His Spirit 'preventing' him (in the old sense of the word).

3–7. In the mission that is given to the prophet, nothing is disguised or kept back. The difficulties of his position, the qualities that he will need, the fact that he will have to speak of other nations besides his own, are all mentioned without reserve. The shrinking of Moses from the task laid upon him, and Jonah's attempt to escape from his call may illustrate the hesitancy that is implied here on the part of Ezekiel. The charge given to the young Ezekiel may be compared with that of St Paul to the young Timothy, who had to deal with Jews and Gentiles alike:—'Be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching' (2 Tim. iv. 2). That the word 'nations' implies more than

me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to nations that are rebellious, which have rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me,
4 even unto this very day. And the children are impudent and stiffhearted; [1]I do send thee unto them: and thou

[1] Or, *unto whom I send thee*

the tribes of Israel is surely clear from the prophecies of xxv.–xxxii.; though the prophet's mission, so far as they were concerned, did not involve a verbal deliverance of the message (iii. 5, 6): the prophet was simply to utter God's will concerning them. The rebellion of Israel is carried back (see xx. 8) not only to the time of the wanderings in the wilderness but to the bondage in Egypt. The impudence of *v.* 4 is the 'hard forehead' (we use the expression 'brazen-faced') of iii. 7. The prophet is empowered to say, as he does say afterwards (e.g. v. 5), that his words are the words of God. The actual Name of God used is Adonai Jehovah—the divine name if printed in capitals in A.V. or R.V. implies the use of the name Jehovah —a title which is especially used in the present Hebrew text of Ezekiel, though it also occurs with less frequency elsewhere. The form of the title may be due to the fact that when, in later times, the Name Jehovah was declared unutterable, the word Adonai may have at first been placed in the margin as its substitute, and then afterwards incorporated into the text. When this was done, Elohim was read for Jehovah, and when the vowel points were added, in still later times, to the Hebrew text, of which the original form only contained the consonants, Jehovah received the vowel points of Elohim.

The prophet's hearers were to have no excuse. They had a free will to hear or to forbear, but in any case, it is implied that they could not help knowing that they had had a prophet amongst them. The hearing and the forbearing of those to whom the prophet is sent is especially emphasized (cp. iii. 11, 27). The fall of Jerusalem, which was soon to come, would prove the truth of his message (cp. xxxiii. 33).

As against the impudence and stiffheartedness of his hearers, the prophet was to take up a fearless attitude, indicated later by the forehead 'as an adamant harder than flint' (iii. 9), just as Jeremiah was bidden to do (i. 8). The expression 'rebellious house' (literally, 'house of rebelliousness') is one characteristic of this book. The 'briers and thorns' indicate the heathen amongst whom the Jews were dwelling (cp. xxviii. 24 where Zidon and the other neighbours of the Jews in Palestine are called 'a pricking brier' and 'a grieving thorn'). They at any rate would not help the prophet to assert his authority. The scorpion is dangerous from its sting. Those amongst whom the prophet was dwelling would endeavour to injure him with venomous acts and words.

5 shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. And they,
whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for
they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there
6 hath been a prophet among them. And thou, son of man,
be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words,
though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost
dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor
be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious
7 house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them,
whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear:
8 for they are most rebellious. But thou, son of man, hear
what I say unto thee; be not thou rebellious like that
rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give
9 thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was put forth
10 unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and he
spread it before me; and it was written within and
without: and there was written therein lamentations, and
mourning, and woe. **III.** 1 And he said unto me, Son

II. 8–III. 3. The prophet is bidden not to follow the people in their rebellious ways, but, after inspecting a roll which is spread out before him, to eat it, and then saturated, as it were, with its contents to utter them to his fellow-countrymen in their captivity. Eating (Rev. x. 9 'Take it' i.e. a little book, 'and eat it up'; cp. Jer. x. 15) or drinking (2 Esdr. xiv. 38–41, 'Open thy mouth, and drink that I give thee to drink...and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit retained its memory: and my mouth was opened, and shut no more') was a symbolic acceptance of inspiration in apocalyptic literature. The putting forth of the hand occurs again in viii. 3, and something like it in Dan. x. 10. The book would be unrolled at right angles to the writing which would be in columns, and therefore a considerable length of the passage would be disclosed. The roll had writing on both sides (cp. Rev. v. 1) of a mournful character such as is disclosed in the succeeding prophecies. Its message was to be first to the Jews, just as the Christian message was delivered first to them. Before being delivered, it was necessary that the prophet should thoroughly digest and assimilate it. This is indicated by the first clause of *v.* 3. The latter part of the verse indicates, that as the book was divine it must necessarily be good (sweet as honey) in itself. In the corresponding passage in Rev. (x. 9, 10) bitterness follows, and, though bitterness is not mentioned here, it is implied later (iii. 14). To speak and act with truth is good but often

of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go, speak
2 unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and
3 he caused me to eat the roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness.

iii. *A Charge given to the Prophet.* iii. 4–11.

4 And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.
5 For thou art not sent to a people [1]of a strange speech and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel;
6 not to many peoples of a strange speech and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, if I sent thee to them, they would hearken unto thee.

[1] Heb. *deep of lip and heavy of tongue.*

carries with it an element of bitterness which makes it distasteful.

We can derive some guidance from this passage in forming a proper estimate of what is involved in Inspiration. The prophet is to absorb into himself what is given him from above, and then is to give it out with his own lips and in his own language. The individuality of the prophet will therefore have full play and be allowed to manifest itself.

4–11. In these verses we have a reiteration of the mission of the prophet, couched in stronger language than before, so far as regards the attitude the prophet was to take up towards his fellow-countrymen. The stern difficulties of the situation are not smoothed away in the slightest degree. It is a tremendous task that the prophet has to undertake, but God will be with him. We may compare with the last clause of *v.* 6 our Lord's words:—'if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which were done in you (i.e. Chorazin and Bethsaida), they would have repented long ago...if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee (i.e. Capernaum), it would have remained until this day' (Matt. xi. 21, 23: Lk. x. 13): and in *v.* 7 again:—'If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you' (John xv. 20: cp. Matt. x. 24). The idea conveyed by *vv.* 8, 9 is expressed in an ampler form in Jer. i. 18, a chapter which bears many points of resemblance to this. In Isaiah (l. 7) the prophet speaks of himself as setting his face like a flint; here the prophet's forehead is made still harder, 'as an adamant.' The Hebrew *shamîr*, translated adamant, is equivalent to corundum or emery,

7 But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for
they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel
8 are of an hard forehead and of a stiff heart. Behold,
I have made thy face hard against their faces, and thy
9 forehead hard against their foreheads. As an adamant
harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them
not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a
10 rebellious house. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man,
all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine
11 heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them
of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak
unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether
they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

iv. *The presence of God with the Prophet, and his transference to Tel-abib.* iii. 12–15.

12 Then the spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me
the voice of a great rushing, *saying*, Blessed be the glory
13 of the LORD from his place. And *I heard* the noise of
the wings of the living creatures as they touched one

and was the hardest substance known at the time. The care the prophet was to exercise on his part in his reception of the message to be delivered is emphasized: no part of it was to be lost. 'The children of thy people' is a phrase that occurs again in chaps. xxxiii. (four times) and xxxvii. (*v.* 18).

12–15. The prophet is taken to the place where he is to exercise his office. His removal is attributed to the spirit, as in the case of Philip the deacon (Acts viii. 39, 40). The removal is intended to be looked upon just like the eating of the roll, as one simply *in vision* (cp. viii. 3: xi. 24: Numb. xxiv. 4, 16), for the prophet was already by the river Chebar (i. 1). It was a removal from a state of ecstasy to a condition in which he could have practical intercourse with those to whom he was sent. The revulsion of feeling consequent upon the change is indicated in *vv.* 14, 15, and some little time elapses before the prophet can go forward in his work, and then only after further instruction and inspiration. All up to this point had been transacted in the presence of the glory of the Lord and of the vision; the vision now passes away, and the prophet is left still feeling the Lord's hand upon him. Who uttered the ejaculation (*v.* 12) 'Blessed be the glory of the Lord from His place,' is not stated (the word *saying*

another, and the noise of the wheels [1]beside them, even
14 the noise of a great rushing. So the spirit lifted me up,
and took me away: and I went in bitterness, in the heat
of my spirit, and the hand of the LORD was strong upon
15 me. Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib,
that [2]dwelt by the river Chebar, [3]and to where they
[2]dwelt; and I sat there astonied among them seven
days.

[1] Or, *over against* [2] Or, *sat* [3] Another reading is, *and I sat where they sat.*

is not in the original), though 'the voice of a great rushing' must be attributed to the wings and the wheels of the vision; and the noise of the wings is said (i. 24) to be 'like the voice of the Almighty.' It is meant, then, for the voice of Him Who was behind the vision.

The vision gone, the prophet is left in bitterness, a bitterness caused by the sense of the message he had to deliver (cp. Rev. x. 10) and accompanied by the heat of his spirit. This latter expression implies vexation at the character of the work imposed upon him, curbed, however, by the hand of the Lord, which was constantly laid upon him (cp. e.g. i. 3: *v.* 22). He now finds himself with his fellow-captives at Tel-abib. Dr Cheyne maintains that we should place the scene of this narrative in North Arabia instead of in Babylon (see *Encycl. Bib.* 4919), but this theory does not meet with any support from other critics of weight. The first part of the name points to a mound indicating the ruins of a previously existing town. The latter part, Abib (i.e. young ears of barley), is familiar to us as the name of a month (Ex. xiii. 4), the month when the young ears of corn came into existence. But it is doubtful whether this is really the meaning of the word in Tel-abib. The early translators certainly did not think so, for they did not make a proper name of the place to which the prophet came at all, but translated it; thus the Vulgate says:—'to a heap of new fruits,' whilst the Septuagint seems to have read something quite different: 'I came to the captivity in a state of exaltation, and went around those dwelling by the river Chebar.' If it be a place, Tel-abib has not yet been identified: and, if the name was Babylonian, its meaning would be Deluge-mound (*Encycl. Bib.* 4920). The R.V. marg. rendering 'sat' recalls Ps. cxxxvii. 1 'By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down.' The sitting of the captives implies their disconsolate state (cp. Lam. ii. 10: Job ii. 13 where there is the same period of seven days), which infected the prophet also. The word 'astonied' implies the stupor of grief. Such a state of intense prostration under grief is attributed to Ezra (ix. 3: cp. Neh. i. 4). The period of seven days was a recognized time of mourning (see Gen. l. 10: Job ii. 13).

B. AFTER SEVEN DAYS, A FURTHER CHARGE TO THE PROPHET, A FURTHER VISION, SYMBOLIC ACTIONS ON THE PROPHET'S PART WITH THEIR EXPLANATIONS, AND PROPHECIES OF DOOM, B.C. 592. CHAPTERS III. 16—VII.

v. *A further Charge to the Prophet.* iii. 16–21.

16 And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the
17 word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man,
I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel:
therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them
18 warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou
shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor
speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save

16–21. The seven days over, a fresh charge is given to the prophet. It looks forward especially to the prophecies contained in chaps. xviii., xxxiii., and is a summary of them. The prophet is to be a watchman (xxxiii. 7: the idea is worked out in xxxiii. 1–9: cp. Heb. xiii. 17). The warning he was to give was of danger from the guilt of sin, and it was to be a heaven-sent warning. All responsibility on the part of the prophet was to cease with the delivery of his message but not before. The sentence of death for the sinner was the one announced from the beginning (Gen. ii. 17). Definite individual responsibility for moral character is more plainly asserted than perhaps it had ever been before. 'His blood will I require' is a form of expression used because to the Hebrew blood was an equivalent for life (Gen. ix. 4).

20. *and I lay a stumblingblock before him*] Cp. Jer. vi. 21 and our Lord's use of Is. vi. 9, 10. Such a case can only occur in the person of one who continues in a course of hardened sin, e.g. the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

It was a definite article of Jewish belief that good works had something meritorious about them and went up 'for a memorial before God' (Acts x. 4). Thus Nehemiah says:—'Remember unto me, O my God, for good, all that I have done for this people' (v. 19: cp. xiii. 14, 22, 31). This memorial is to be blotted out in the case of the unrepentant sinner.

This commission to the prophet brings into distinct prominence one side of the prophetic office, which is sometimes forgotten—that of the *teller-forth* of God's will for his people, without any definite announcement of future events. Sin and its consequences, that is to be the leading idea of Ezekiel's pronouncements.

his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity;
19 but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou
warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness,
nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity;
20 but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, when a righteous
man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit in-
iquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die:
because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in
his sin, and his righteous deeds which he hath done shall
not be remembered: but his blood will I require at thine
21 hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that
the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely
live, because he took warning; and thou hast delivered
thy soul.

vi. *A renewal of the Prophet's Vision, and the Charge repeated.* iii. 22–27.

22 And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and
he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the [1]plain, and I will
23 there talk with thee. Then I arose, and went forth into
the [1]plain: and, behold, the glory of the LORD stood there,

[1] Or, *valley*

22–27. A further manifestation of God is disclosed to the prophet similar to what had gone before, and a further instruction is given to him, laying upon him a command of temporary silence to be followed by a declaration to his rebellious fellow-countrymen, as the commencement of his prophetic utterances. 'The hand of the Lord' is upon him as before (i. 3). This time he is called 'into the plain,' cp. the 'plain in the land of Shinar' (Gen. xi. 2), where Shinar is identical with Babylonia. It is here the plain (hardly 'valley' as in the margin) on which the mound Tel-abib, the place where the prophet abode, stood. The vision is identical with the previous vision; and its effect was the same. But the instruction given to the prophet was different. He was to shut himself up in his house, and not deliver any message until he was bidden. The subject of the verb in the sentence 'they shall lay bands upon thee' is obscure, especially as it is said later (iv. 8) 'I will lay bands upon thee.' The Hebrew word is probably wrongly pointed in the Massoretic text and should be read as a passive, 'bands

as the glory which I saw by the river Chebar: and I fell
24 on my face. Then the spirit entered into me, and set me
upon my feet; and he spake with me, and said unto me,
25 Go, shut thyself within thine house. But thou, son of
man, behold, they shall lay bands upon thee, and shall
bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among
26 them: and I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of
thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to
27 them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house. But
when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou
shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: He that
heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him
forbear: for they are a rebellious house.

vii. *The first of a series* (iv.—v. 1–4) *of symbolic actions to illustrate the siege of Jerusalem: the tile and the iron pan.* iv. 1–3.

The whole of this section (iv.—v. 1–4) is intended to pourtray the prophet's occupation during his time of silence. Though he is shut up in his house and abstains from all prophetic utterance, he is accessible to those who come to see him and to observe his actions.

The actions which the prophet is bidden to perform must have gone on within the same period. To our prosaic western minds it seems difficult to imagine that the prophet would do such things as he is bidden to do here. But Oriental habits of thought and action are far different from ours. When we think of the actions of a Simeon Stylites, or of some of the ascetics even in these days in India, we may well hesitate to say that it was impossible for Ezekiel to do them—even to the constant lying upon one side for so many days.

Such actions as those of Ezekiel would appeal naturally to his fellow-countrymen. Other prophets had acted in similar ways before. Isaiah, for

shall be laid upon thee.' The idea of the tongue cleaving to the roof of the mouth is met with elsewhere (Job xxix. 10: Ps. cxxxvii. 6: Lam. iv. 4: cp. also Ps. xxii. 15 'my tongue cleaveth to my jaws'). The opening of the mouth is alluded to again in xxiv. 27, xxix. 21. The free-will of the hearers is asserted, as in Rev. xxii. 11, though the turn of the sentence is not quite the same: 'He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still.'

instance, 'walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia' (xx. 3). Jeremiah wore a girdle without putting it in water, and then hid it in a hole of the rock (xiii. 1–5). Similar actions have appealed to Oriental minds at other times. Agabus the prophet from Judaea taking St Paul's girdle and binding his own feet and hands as symbolical of what was to happen to the owner of the girdle is a case in point. It was this appeal to outward actions and surroundings that made our Lord's teaching so attractive to his hearers. The finding nothing but leaves on the fig-tree and its cursing in consequence is a notable example of this; and it is to satisfy the natural craving of many minds that external symbolism has found so marked a place as it has in many forms of Christian worship.

It has been questioned how long the prophet's silence is supposed to be maintained. It seems quite clear that it terminates at v. 4. The prophet had been told to prepare his message with the words, 'Thus saith the Lord GOD.' V. 5 begins with these identical words and they are followed by what is to all intents and purposes an explanation of the actions of the time of silence. Others have held that the silence lasted till the news of the fall of Jerusalem reached Ezekiel (xxxiii. 22), but the passage referred to, taken in conjunction with what goes before (xxiv. 26, 27), implies rather that the prophet had to pass through various periods of enforced silence.

IV. 1 Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and pourtray upon it a city, even Jerusalem: 2 and lay siege against it, and build forts against it, and

IV. 1–3. THE TILE AND THE IRON PAN. The prophet is himself in symbolical action to take part in the siege of the city. For 'set thy face toward' (*v.* 3), cp. xx. 46: xxi. 2: the determined character of the siege is implied by the expression. Over and over again in this book the prophet has to act a part as a sign to his fellow-countrymen (xii. 6, 11: xxiv. 24, 27). In this way they were to be informed about the events that were occurring in their native land. The regular details of siege work were to be pourtrayed on the tile or tablet. Nebuchadrezzar built forts against Jerusalem (2 K. xxv. 1). The casting up of mounts is constantly alluded to in this book (xvii. 17: xxi. 22: xxvi. 8). The use of battering rams is also mentioned twice later in this book (xxi. 22: xxvi. 9). The prophet himself is outside the rampart of the besiegers, which is represented by the 'iron pan.' The subjects to be pourtrayed on the tile remind us of the graphic illustrations of sieges and fightings to be seen on the walls of the palaces or temples in Babylonia. Some of the tablets found in Babylonia have on them plans of cities. Illustrations of some of them can be seen in Toy's *Ezekiel* (p. 98), where also may be found a pictorial attempt to illustrate the appearance of the wheels of Ezekiel's vision. Pictures, derived from the monuments, illustrating the operations of a siege can be seen in *Encycl. Bib.* art. 'Siege.' 'A striking

cast up a mount against it; set camps also against it, and
3 plant battering rams against it round about. And take thou unto thee an iron [1]pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face toward it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

viii. *The second symbolic action:—the prophet to lie first on his left side and then on his right side, and to have limited rations for a set time.* iv. 4–17.

4 Moreover lie thou upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: *according to* the

[1] Or, *flat plate*

illustration of Ezek. iv. 3 is furnished by Doughty (*Ar. Des.* i. 593), who describes an iron-plated door in the castle of Hāyil: "the plates (in the indigence of their arts) are the shield-like iron pans (tannūr) upon which the town house-wives bake their girdle-bread"' (*Encycl. Bib.* 891). Some have tried to find in the iron pan a symbol of the barrier that there was between God, as represented by His prophet, and His people, but this can scarcely be said to be contemplated in the action here described.

4–17. THE SECOND SYMBOLIC ACTION. The 'son of man' is to bear the iniquity of his people, the house of Israel as well as the house of Judah, as he lies first upon his left side and then upon his right side. He was to be the people personified, as it were, and to go through in action all the horrors of the siege, some of which were to cause him great distress of soul because of the uncleanness and pollution which they involved. A day for a year is the recognized proportion of punishment (cp. Num. xiv. 34, and the days and weeks of Daniel's prophecies, ix. 24–27: xii. 11–13).

There are great difficulties connected with the number of the days (for years) in this passage. To begin with, according to the Hebrew text, the number of days for the prophet to lie on his left side is 390 and on his right side 40, and yet when the time comes for him to store up provisions for the period of the siege (*v.* 9), the provisions are only to last 390 days. According to Jeremiah (xxxix. 1: lii. 4–7) the actual siege lasted from the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign until the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year of the same reign. This considerably exceeds the 430 days of the passage in Ezekiel, which, however, does not necessarily imply that the commencement of the siege and of the prophet's lying on his side were co-terminous. This is one difficulty, but a still greater one

number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it, thou shalt
5 bear their iniquity. For I have appointed the years of
their iniquity to be unto thee a number of days, even
three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the
6 iniquity of the house of Israel. And again, when thou
hast accomplished these, thou shalt lie on thy right side,
and shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah: forty
days, each day for a year, have I appointed it unto thee.
7 And thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem,
with thine arm uncovered; and thou shalt prophesy
8 against it. And, behold, I lay bands upon thee, and thou
shalt not turn thee from one side to another, till thou
9 hast accomplished the days of thy siege. Take thou also

arises when we ask what periods of transgression of 390 years and 40 years respectively does the prophecy contemplate? If we reckon 390 years backward from the fall of Samaria (722 B.C.) we are carried to a date 40 years preceding the usually accepted date for the accession of Saul. But, if (by a comparison of *vv.* 5, 6, 9) we come to the conclusion that 390 in *v.* 4 is a mistake of a scribe for 350, we find ourselves at the actual date (1072 B.C.) given for the accession of Saul when it may be said in one sense that the kingdom of Israel began, and also the period of transgression may be held to have commenced. The number '40' often seems to have a symbolical sense ascribed to it in the Old Testament (cp. e.g. Numb. xiv. 34: 1 K. xix. 8), and not to have been used always with exact numerical accuracy. It may be taken here to refer to short periods when the kings of Judah were dallying with the Assyrians and trying to seek an alliance on equal terms with that great kingdom. That they had done so in time past is clear from xxi. 12, 13. In especial we may refer to the reign of Ahaz (2 K. xvii.), and the embassy early in Zechariah's reign (Jer. xxix. 3), perhaps also to the treatment of Merodach-Baladan's ambassadors (Is. xxxix.).

The Septuagint translator either had a different text before him or felt the difficulties that beset the text as it stands, and proceeded to emend it by inserting '150' in *v.* 4, reading '190' for '390' in *v.* 5 and making it the total of 150+40; and also reading '190' in *v.* 9. This 150 years is apparently intended to represent the period between the fall of Samaria and the destruction of Jerusalem (722–588 B.C.), whilst the 40 years are, in round numbers, the years from the fall of Jerusalem to the Decree of Cyrus, though the Captivity was generally reckoned to have lasted 70 years which were reckoned from Jehoiakim's reign (606–536 B.C.).

Others again seeing that 390+40 =430 have compared this 430 years with the 430 years of Ex. xii. 40:

unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentils, and millet, and spelt, and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof; *according to* the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, even three hundred and
10 ninety days, shalt thou eat thereof. And thy meat which thou shalt eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day:
11 from time to time shalt thou eat it. And thou shalt drink water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: from time to
12 time shalt thou drink. And thou shalt eat it as barley cakes, and thou shalt bake it in their sight with dung that
13 cometh out of man. And the LORD said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their bread unclean, among the
14 nations whither I will drive them. Then said I, Ah Lord

Gal. iii. 17, but it can scarcely be conceived that this was the period the prophecy had in view.

The uncovering of the prophet's arm (*v.* 7) indicates, by an outward sign, what is immediately said, that his prophecy was to be against Jerusalem (cp. Is. lii. 10), for he uncovers it to set his arm free to do the work which has to be done; and, just as in the last chapter (iii. 25), so here restraint is laid upon the prophet. It was to be *his* siege as well as the siege of Jerusalem. During his siege he was to put himself on rations of the food which he had stored up to begin with. The varieties of food in the one vessel indicate the impossibility owing to scarcity of gathering enough of one kind of meal. The word 'meat' in the English Bible often means 'food.' That rations were served out during the siege of Jerusalem we see in the case of Jeremiah who received daily in 'the court of the guard' 'a loaf of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was spent' (Jer. xxxvii. 21).

To estimate the actual amount of a day's rations is difficult because the standards varied so much and we are not told whether it is the Babylonian or Hebrew shekel which is intended here. If we take a mean value, perhaps about 8 ozs. is the daily amount of bread which was to be eaten, though it was to be of a poor mixed character, and not of the quality of barley bread. The allowance of water would be about $1\frac{1}{2}$ pints or rather more, if we take the *hin* as about $1\frac{1}{3}$ gallons. Scarcity of fuel also is to cause the prophet great distress, in his fear of eating unclean food. The 'Ah Lord God!' is here as elsewhere a protest against God's ruling (cp. ix. 8: xi. 13: xx. 49). We may compare St Peter's 'Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean' (Acts x. 14). Just as to eat of meat from an animal that died a natural death or was torn of beasts involved ceremonial uncleanness (Lev. vii. 24), so the use of the fuel indicated in *v.* 5 made the prophet shrink from that which was baked with it, for he

GOD! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn of beasts; neither came there
15 abominable flesh into my mouth. Then he said unto me, See, I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung, and
16 thou shalt prepare thy bread thereon. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with carefulness; and they shall drink water by
17 measure, and with astonishment: that they may want bread and water, and be astonied one with another, and pine away in their iniquity.

ix. *The third symbolic action with the sharp sword or barber's razor, and the prophet's hair.* v. 1–4.

V. 1 And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp sword, *as* a barber's razor shalt thou take it unto thee, and shalt cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard:

had always kept from 'abominable flesh,' though there were no doubt temptations to partake of forbidden food in Babylon. An alternative fuel is allowed the prophet, almost as repulsive to Western ideas as the first, but constantly prepared, stored up, and used to-day by the Bedouin. The 'staff of bread' (the staff of life upon which man supports himself) occurs again in v. 16: xiv. 13 and also in Lev. xxvi. 26: Ps. cv. 16 (cp. Is. iii. 1). When the staff is broken man cannot lean upon it to support himself. In Jerusalem their bread and water was to be measured out like the prophet's. To drink water 'with astonishment' (cp. 'astonied,' iii. 15) implies the state of stupefaction into which the siege would throw the people: whilst their pining away (cp. xxiv. 23: xxxiii. 10: Lev. xxvi. 39) would be because of the siege which was caused by their iniquity.

V. 1–4. THE THIRD SYMBOLIC ACTION. The sword as razor, and the prophet's hair. In order to shew that this action was symbolic the prophet uses a sharp sword instead of a barber's razor. For the use of a razor to imply destruction cp. Is. vii. 20. The divine judgement is to be exercised exactly, this is the interpretation of the 'balances to weigh.' 'Round about it' in *v.* 2 signifies 'round about the city.' The city referred to is the city depicted on the clay tablet. *Vv.* 2, 3 indicate that, after the fire of the sacking of the city, and the sword of slaughter in it, as well as the sword unsheathed in pursuit of the scattered fugitives had each exacted its third of the

then take thee balances to weigh, and [1]divide the hair.
2 A third part shalt thou burn in the fire in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled; and thou shalt take a third part, and smite with the sword round about it; and a third part thou shalt scatter to the
3 wind, and I will draw out a sword after them. And thou shalt take [2]thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy
4 skirts. And of these again shalt thou take, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; therefrom shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

x. *The first of a series of five prophecies consequent upon and interpretative of the three symbolic actions, as foretelling the tripartite destruction of the people.* v. 5–17.

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD: This is Jerusalem: I have set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are

[1] Heb. *divide them.* [2] Heb. *thence.*

whole number of victims, there was to be an infinitesimally small remnant left in the land (Jer. lii. 16), and that remnant was to pass through the furnace of affliction (Jer. xlii. 18: xliv. 16). The last clause of *v.* 4 is of very doubtful meaning. Is the fire still a destructive fire, or is it a fire of purification? The former seems to be excluded by the statement that it is to go forth 'into all the house of Israel.' It seems more natural then to say that the fire of devastation became the fire of purification for those that were left, just as it is so often asserted that the great Fire of London purified the city from any further consequences of the plague which had devastated it a year before.

5–17. With the completion of the instructions to the prophet as to his symbolic actions comes also the unsealing of his lips that he may explain what he is doing or has done. This is implied by the opening words 'Thus saith the Lord God,' with which the prophet had been twice ordered to deliver his message (iii. 11, 27). They had seen the tablet with the sketch upon it; the lecture upon the illustrations now commences:—'This is Jerusalem,' a city which had done worse than its neighbours, although it was looked upon by its own inhabitants as the centre of the world, and although it had had greater opportunities and privileges than they, because of its divine institutions. The word translated 'ye are turbulent' (*v.* 7) is a very doubtful one, and is most probably to be corrected into one meaning 'ye have rebelled,'

6 round about her. And she hath [1]rebelled against my
judgements in doing wickedness more than the nations,
and against my statutes more than the countries that are
round about her: for they have rejected my judgements,
and as for my statutes, they have not walked in them.
7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye are
turbulent more than the nations that are round about
you, and have not walked in my statutes, neither have
kept my judgements, neither have done after the [2]ordin-
8 ances of the nations that are round about you; therefore
thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I, even I, am against
thee; and I will execute judgements in the midst of thee
9 in the sight of the nations. And I will do in thee that
which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any
10 more the like, because of all thine abominations. There-

[1] Or, *changed my judgements into wickedness* [2] Heb. *judgements.*

which gives a better sense. The twofold division into statutes and judgements is one which constantly recurs; the word 'ordinances,' as the marginal note indicates, represents the same Hebrew word as 'judgements.' The distinction between the two (cp. Driver on Deut. iv. 1) is that 'statutes' are actual enactments of principles in the different branches of law, whilst 'judgements' are the applications of these principles by judicial sentences. Instances of 'judgements' may be found in Lev. xxiv. 10–23: Num. xv. 32–36. The law-abiding life is often spoken of as a path to walk in (*v.* 7) or a way to run along (Ps. cxix. 32). 'I am against thee' is another constantly recurring phrase in this book (xiii. 8: xxi. 3, etc.), as also is 'I will execute judgements' (xi. 9: xvi. 41: xxiii. 10). This antagonism and judgement had been indicated in the first symbolical action by the prophet being bidden to lay siege against the city (iv. 3). The nations were to be witnesses of the punishment and defilement of the people (cp. xxii. 16), a punishment different from any other, 'for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem,' said a later prophet (Dan. ix. 12: cp. Bar. ii. 2, which is followed by a reminiscence of *v.* 10). The prophecy of the first half of *v.* 10 corresponds with Jer. xix. 9: cp. Lev. xxvi. 29: Deut. xxviii. 53: Lam. ii. 20: iv. 10. An instance of such an occurrence is given us in the account of the siege of Samaria in Jehoram's reign (2 K. vi. 28, 29), and this scarcity of food had been symbolized in the prophet's second action. The dispersal of the people is a constant theme of prophecy (cp. xii. 14, 15: xvii. 21), and in later ages the term *Diaspora*, i.e. Dispersion, had quite a technical

fore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgements in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will
11 I scatter unto all the winds. Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also [1]diminish *thee*; neither
12 shall mine eye spare, and I also will have no pity. A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee; and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and a third part I will scatter unto all the winds, and
13 will draw out a sword after them. Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will [2]satisfy my fury [3]upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the

[1] Or, *withdraw mine eye that it shall not spare* Another reading is, *hew* thee *down*. [2] Heb. *bring to rest*. [3] Or, *toward*

sense. In the New Testament we meet with 'the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion' (James i. 1: cp. 2 Macc. i. 27) and 'sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia' (1 Pet. i. 1); and in St John's Gospel (vii. 35) 'the Jews' are represented as saying of our Lord:—'Will He go unto the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?' The next verses (11, 12) deal with the third symbolic action, and are introduced with a solemn asseveration (cp. xiv. 16, 18, 20: xvi. 48, etc.). The way in which the sanctuary was defiled was exhibited to Ezekiel 'in the visions of God' (viii.: cp. vii. 20: xi. 18, 21: xxiii. 39). As the marginal note shews, there are difficulties about the words 'will I also diminish thee.' In addition to the meanings given there, another is possible, derived from xvi. 27 and referring to the cutting off of necessary supplies. The verse looks back to the cutting off of the prophet's beard, and the reading of the text accepted by R.V. has the verb which is used of the beard in other passages (Is. xv. 2: Jer. xlviii. 37). For the last words of the verse, cp. vii. 4, 9: viii. 18: ix. 5, 10. The details of the third action are explained, and remind us of the three alternatives put before David by God, three (in 2 Sam. seven) years of famine, three months of pursuit by the sword of the enemy, three days' pestilence (1 Chr. xxi. 11, 12). All three are now to come upon the land (vi. 11, 12: cp. Jer. xv. 2) and each is to destroy a third part of the population. It is only in this way that the divine wrath can be laid to rest (R.V. *marg.* cp. vi. 12: vii. 8: xvi. 42: xx. 8, 21: xxi. 17: xxiv. 13: Lam. iv. 11).

LORD have spoken in my zeal, when I have accomplished
14 my fury upon them. Moreover I will make thee a desola-
tion and a reproach, among the nations that are round
15 about thee, in the sight of all that pass by. So it shall be
a reproach and a taunt, an instruction and an astonish-
ment, unto the nations that are round about thee, when
I shall execute judgements in thee in anger and in fury,
16 and in furious rebukes: I the LORD have spoken it: when
I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, that are
for destruction, which I will send to destroy you; and
I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your
17 staff of bread; and I will send upon you famine and evil
beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and
blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword
upon thee: I the LORD have spoken it.

xi. *The second prophecy of the series:—an address to the natural characteristics of the country—the mountains, the hills, the watercourses, the valleys.* vi. 1–10.

VI. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

The word 'zeal' used here of God, as can be seen from other passages (xxxvi. 5, 6: xxxviii. 19) indicates God's jealousy for His honour, as in the second commandment, 'I the Lord thy God am a jealous God' (cp. the 'godly jealousy,' *marg.* 'jealousy of God,' of St Paul, 2 Cor. xi. 2). The Hebrew word for 'instruction' (*v.* 15) is better omitted as in the Septuagint; if it is left in, it must have the meaning 'an example of warning.' The 'furious rebukes' recur in xxv. 17. 'The evil arrows of famine' is a unique expression: but because it is one of the weapons of destruction which are discharged against the land, famine is treated as coming from the bow of God's wrath. In this verse (16) the second action of the prophet and the declaration made at the end of it (iv. 16, 17) is recurred to, with the addition of a fresh horror in *v.* 17. Evil beasts (cp. xiv. 15: xxxiii. 27: Deut. xxxii. 24) are to be sent upon them as a punishment for their desertion of God, just as is represented to have happened to the immigrants into the territory of the Northern Kingdom after the deportation of the Ten Tribes (2 K. xvii. 25). Pestilence and blood are combined xiv. 19: xxxviii. 22.

VI. 1–7. Just as the prophet was to set his face toward the city

2 Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel,
3 and prophesy [1]unto them, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains and to the hills, to the [2]watercourses and to the valleys: Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword
4 upon you, and I will destroy your high places. And your altars shall become desolate, and your sun-images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your
5 idols. And I will lay the carcases of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round
6 about your altars. In all your dwelling places the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and [3]made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your sun-images may be hewn down, and your works may be

[1] Or, *against* [2] Or, *ravines* [3] Or, *bear their guilt*

of Jerusalem (iv. 3: cp. xxi. 2), so now he is to set his face toward the mountains of Israel, which are constantly mentioned in this book (xix. 9: xxxiii. 28: xxxiv. 13, 14: xxxv. 12: xxxvii. 22: xxxviii. 8: xxxix. 2, 4, 17). In a later chapter (xxxvi. 1–12) we have the mountains of Israel apostrophised again (cp. Ps. cxlviii. 9: Song of 3 Ch. 53) and the same enumeration of mountains and hills, watercourses and valleys also occurs (xxxvi. 4, 6). Upon the mountains and hills stood the unauthorised as well as the idolatrous high places, and this to such an extent that in Ahab's time it could be said by the Syrians 'Their god is a god of the hills....The Lord is a god of the hills, but he is not a god of the valleys' (1 K. xx. 23, 28). It is for this reason that the mountains are in particular denounced. The watercourses (*marg.* ravines) were what are well known by the technical name of *wadys* and correspond very much to the 'nullahs' of India. In them too, and in the valleys, as, for instance, in the valley of the children of Hinnom (Gehenna), some of the worst forms of worship were carried on (Is. lvii. 5, 6: cp. also Lev. xxvi. 30). The sun-images (Lev. xxvi. 30: Is. xvii. 8: xxvii. 9: 2 Ch. xiv. 5: xxxiv. 4, 7: cp. 2 K. xxiii. 5) represent a form of worship against which a caution is uttered in Deut. iv. 19, and a law is promulged (Deut. xvii. 3), and it is recognized in Job xxxi. 26. The older versions of the Old Testament do not seem to have had any very clear idea of what was meant by the *hammanim* or sun-images. The word never occurs in the singular in the Bible, and the 'images' were most likely obelisks. At Carthage and in Phoenicia one of the titles of a Divinity was Baal-hamman, the lord of the sun-obelisk. The worship

7 [1]abolished. And the slain shall fall in the midst of you,
8 and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Yet will I leave a remnant, in that ye shall have some that escape the sword among the nations, when ye shall be scattered
9 through the countries. And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, how that [2]I have been broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they

[1] Heb. *blotted out.* [2] Or, according to most of the ancient versions, *I have broken their &c.*

of the sun extended in all directions. Ezekiel describes the worship of the sun in Jerusalem itself, which he saw 'in the visions of God' (viii. 16, 17), where also were the horses and chariots of the sun (2 K. xxiii. 11), which were destroyed by Josiah. The word used for 'idols' at the end of the verse is an opprobrious term and implies that they were as dung (cp. the name Beelzebul) or that they were mere logs.

Notwithstanding Josiah's reformation the worship of the sun still survived when this prophecy was uttered. The casting of the dead bodies of men before the idols was (see Lev. xxvi. 20) an addition of one pollution to another. There seems to be a constant recollection of the reforms of Josiah (cp. *v.* 5 with 2 K. xxiii. 14, 16), implying that his reforms would have to be done over again. The work of destruction was to go on everywhere (cp. xii. 20). In *v.* 6 the word translated 'made desolate' probably means 'treated as guilty'; but a very small alteration of the text gives the other meaning. The 'works' mentioned are the obelisks, images, and high places, especially the images (cp. Is. xli. 29). The slain men referred to more than once are those of the second and third parts of the prophet's third symbolical action (v. 12).

7. *and ye shall know that I am the Lord*] This is the effect over and over again anticipated in these prophecies of trouble and disaster (vii. 4: xi. 10, 12, etc.).

8–10. A remnant shall escape and be in captivity (xii. 16: xiv. 22: cp. vii. 16). This remnant shall remember the Lord, and their own wicked ways (xvi. 61: xx. 43: xxxvi. 31). The expression 'I have been broken with their whorish heart' can scarcely be right, the marginal rendering 'I have broken their whorish heart' is to be preferred. The whorish heart is an instance of the language that is often used in the Old Testament of Israel standing, in its relation to God, in the position of a bride false to her husband. The whoring takes the form of going after other gods instead of being true to God (cp. Ex. xxxiv. 15). The revulsion is to follow in a state of self-loathing (xx. 43: xxxvi. 31), and a conviction of the truth of God and the reality of His promises.

shall loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.
10 And they shall know that I am the LORD: I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

xii. *The third prophecy of the series:—a denunciation of idolatry as the cause of the tripartite destruction of the people.* vi. 11–14.

11 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Smite with thine hand, and stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas! because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel: for they shall fall by

11–14. A further oracle of the Lord, really a restatement of the previous denunciations. The smiting with the hand (xxi. 14, 17: xxii. 13: cp. Num. xxiv. 10), and the stamping with the foot (xxv. 6) are signs not of sorrow but of indignation at the wickedness of the people. The sword, the famine and the pestilence are once more (cp. v. 12) threatened. The pestilence will attack those of the people who dwell at a distance from the city, but this does not imply that it will not also have its victims within Jerusalem (see vii. 15). The division of the people into those that are far off and those that are near is a familiar one both in the Old and New Testaments (Is. lvii. 19: Acts ii. 39: Eph. ii. 17), though in the New Testament the phrase applies to the distinction between Jew and Gentile. The word translated 'besieged' (marg. 'preserved') is of very doubtful meaning: it is in form the same word which occurs in Is. i. 8 'as a besieged city.' If the marginal rendering is preferred, it must mean 'he that is preserved from the pestilence and the sword.' The same preference for the hills and the tops of the mountains as the place for idolatrous worship is denounced by Hosea (iv. 13), where the 'green tree' (cp. Jer. ii. 20) is defined as the poplar and the terebinth. There seems, however, to be little doubt that the word rendered 'oak' by R.V. here really designates the 'terebinth' (so marg.), *Pistacia Terebinthus*, a shrub which lives to a great age, and sometimes develops into a goodsized tree. The 'oak' of Hos. iv. 13 represents a different Hebrew word, and the terebinth of that passage is the oak of this (R.V. text).

The worship indicated here is supposed to have had its origin in a form of nature worship which actually embodied tree-worship. At any rate, in the false worship of Canaan, the sacrifices were offered and the oracles were sought under the sacred trees. It may have been that, when the breeze stirred the leaves, the rustling sound was held to portend the presence and even perhaps the voice of the deity. It will be re-

12 the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. He that
is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near
shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is
[1]besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish
13 my fury upon them. And ye shall know that I am the
LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols
round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the
tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and
under every thick [2]oak, the place where they did offer
14 sweet savour to all their idols. And I will stretch out my
hand upon them, and make the land desolate and waste,
[3]from the wilderness toward Diblah, throughout all their
habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

[1] Or, *preserved* [2] Or, *terebinth* [3] Or, *more than*

membered, in this connection, that David was bidden (2 S. v. 24) to accept 'the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees' as a token that the Lord was going out before him and that he must bestir himself. But, though the presence of the larger kinds of trees is associated with sacred places, there does not seem to be sufficient proof that they were themselves objects of worship.

The sweet savour of the sacrifice is mentioned instead of the sacrifice, for it was that which was pleasing to the deity (xvi. 19: xx. 28: cp. Gen. viii. 21). The form of expression survives even in the New Testament (Eph. v. 2: Phil. iv. 18: cp. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16). The stretching out of the hand was in chastisement (so xxv. 7, 13, 16: cp. Is. v. 25) in order to lay waste.

The name Diblah is somewhat of a puzzle. Diblah or Diblath is the most frequently occurring form in the Septuagint of the name of the place which is called in the Hebrew Riblah, and a few Hebrew MSS. read Riblah here. But we can scarcely imagine that Ezekiel would refer to Riblah here, for, though Riblah, a place still existing with the same name, was well within the borders of Solomon's empire, it was at least 100 miles away from the nearest boundary even of the Northern Kingdom. Attempts have been made to identify the place with Almon-diblathaim (Numb. xxxiii. 46, 47), one of the camping places in the wilderness, and Beth-diblathaim (Jer. xlviii. 22), both of which were in the land of Moab, and near the edge of the Syrian desert. But all is pure conjecture, and we must be content to confess our ignorance. The marginal rendering 'more than the wilderness toward Diblah' is to be preferred.

xiii. *The fourth prophecy. A short announcement of the coming end.* vii. 1–4.

VII. 1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto
the land of Israel, An end: the end is come upon the four
3 corners of the land. Now is the end upon thee, and I
will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee
according to thy ways; and I will bring upon thee all
4 thine abominations. And mine eye shall not spare thee,
neither will I have pity: but I will bring thy ways upon
thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of
thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

xiv. *The fifth prophecy. A development of the last with all the horrors of the siege depicted.* vii. 5–27.

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD: An evil, an only evil; behold,
6 it cometh. An end is come, the end is come, it awaketh

VII. 1–4. A REITERATED DECLARATION OF PUNISHMENT FOR THE LAND. In *v.* 2 it is equally permissible to make the words 'unto the land of Israel' part of the oracle. The end is as good as present (cp. *v.* 6: Lam. iv. 18: Am. viii. 2: 1 Thess. ii. 16). The consequence of all their evil-doing is to overtake them, and the wrath of God is to be unsparing and pitiless (v. 11). 'I will bring thy ways upon thee' is another phrase peculiar to this book (cp. ix. 10: xi. 21: xvi. 43: xxii. 31). The burden is again taken up of prophecy after prophecy (see note on vi. 7), 'ye shall know that I am the Lord'; that is the lasting result aimed at. There is some little confusion about the order of the verses at the beginning of this chapter. The third and fourth verses are placed by the Septuagint after *vv.* 8, 9.

5–27. A FURTHER DENUNCIATION, WITH A PROPHECY OF SOME OF THE DETAILS OF THE TROUBLES THAT WERE TO COME. There is just enough repetition (and no more) in these prophecies to shew us that Ezekiel repeated his message of impending disaster to the people with whom he was living over and over again, to shew them that their brethren in Judah were without excuse and that their punishment was inevitable. 'An only evil' (*v.* 5) means one standing by itself, unique, a disaster different from all others. *V.* 6 repeats the idea of *v.* 4, but here there is a play upon the words in the Hebrew for 'the end...it awaketh' (haqqêç, hêqîç). In *v.* 7 we are met with a further difficulty, as to the

7 against thee; behold, it cometh. [1]Thy doom is come unto
thee, O inhabitant of the land: the time is come, the day is
near; *a day of* tumult, and not *of* joyful shouting, [2]upon
8 the mountains. Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon
thee, and accomplish mine anger against thee, and will
judge thee according to thy ways; and I will bring upon
9 thee all thine abominations. And mine eye shall not
spare, neither will I have pity: I will bring upon thee
according to thy ways, and thine abominations shall be in
the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I the LORD do
10 smite. Behold, the day, behold, it cometh: thy doom is
gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride hath budded.
11 Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness; [3]none of
them *shall remain*, nor of their multitude, nor of their
wealth: neither shall there be [4]eminency among them.
12 The time is come, the day draweth near: let not the buyer

[1] Or, *The turn* Or, *The crowning time* [2] Or, *from* [3] Or, *not from them, nor from their multitude, nor from their wealth* [4] Or, *wailing for them*

meaning of the word translated 'doom' (*marg.* turn, or, crowning time: A.V. the morning). It is not clear that it is recognized at all by the Septuagint; if it is, it was considered to mean 'end.' The word occurs again in *v.* 10. The only other passage in which it is found is Is. xxviii. 5 where it is translated 'diadem.' This meaning is just possible in *v.* 10 (see later) but not here. It may be that in the dislocation which the passage has undergone at some time or other, the word has crept in here from *v.* 10 instead of that meaning 'the end': otherwise, and this is less probable, though it has some support from the Arabic, it must be taken as in R.V. 'doom,' that which comes round to us in the circle of events. It is *the* end, *the* time, *the* day, i.e. *the* end that must inevitably be the result of what had preceded. There is scarcely any need to insert in *v.* 7 with R.V. *a day of*. The 'tumult' is really 'discomfiture' (so 1 S. xiv. 20, and other places for the same Hebrew expression). It was the discomfiture that was to come upon them from their enemies as the instruments of the divine wrath. The pouring out of fury, a phrase common in this book (ix. 8: xiv. 19: xx. 8, 13, 21, 33, 34: xx. 22: xxxvi. 18), is connected with the idea of the cup of the wine of the fury of God (cp. Jer. xxv. 15). The verse in which it occurs corresponds with *v.* 3 in the previous oracle, as does *v.* 9 with *v.* 4. The word translated 'doom' (see *v.* 7) can in this verse equally well have its general meaning 'the diadem has gone forth'; the clause then stands in parallelism with the next words 'the rod hath

rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the
13 multitude thereof. For the seller shall not return to that
which is sold, [1]although they be yet alive: for the vision
is touching the whole multitude thereof, [2]none shall
return; neither shall any strengthen himself [3]in the
14 iniquity of his life. They have blown the trumpet, and
have made all ready; but none goeth to the battle: for
15 my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof. The sword is
without, and the pestilence and the famine within: he
that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is
16 in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him. But
they that escape of them shall escape, and shall be on the
mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning,
17 every one in his iniquity. All hands shall be feeble, and
18 all knees shall be weak as water. They shall also gird
themselves with sackcloth, and horror shall cover them;

[1] Heb. *though their life be yet among the living.* [2] Or, *it shall not turn back*
[3] Or, *whose life is in his iniquity*

blossomed.' Both clauses will then indicate the passing of righteous rule to be succeeded by a period of arrogancy and violence. If, however, the translation of the R.V. is preferred the doom and the rod will indicate the chastisement and destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon. In any case a time of lawlessness is to destroy all wealth and all commercial prosperity. The population and its wealth were alike to disappear (cp. xvii. 13). The last clause of *v.* 11 reads like a note explaining the previous words which has found its way into the text: it is omitted in the best text of the Septuagint. The difficulties of interpretation in this chapter are partly due to the fact that it is cast in a more poetic strain than most of the rest of the book. In this time of trouble all would suffer alike, buyer and seller (so Is. xxiv. 2: cp. 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30); all were to be affected; even though some men's lives were preserved, and though they assembled for the contest, they would neither enter into battle, nor would they return to the occupations of their life which had been involved in sin; for, with the exception of an infinitesimal minority, destruction in some form would overwhelm them all. This is clearly the general meaning of *vv.* 11–16, though the exact meaning of each clause is often obscure, and there is some confusion in the text. *Vv.* 11, 12 and 13, 14 are like a strophe and antistrophe in a chorus of a Greek tragedy with the same concluding strain 'my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof.' The return

and shame shall be upon all faces, and baldness upon all
19 their heads. They shall cast their silver in the streets,
and their gold shall be as an unclean thing; their silver
and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day
of the wrath of the LORD; they shall not satisfy their
souls, neither fill their bowels: because it hath been the
20 stumblingblock of their iniquity. As for the beauty of his
ornament, [1]he set it in majesty: but they made the images
of their abominations *and* their detestable things [2]therein:
therefore have I made it unto them as an unclean thing.

[1] Or, *they turned it to pride; and they &c.* [2] Or, *thereof*

of the seller to what he had sold is an allusion to the return of anyone to his possessions in the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 10, 13). What the prophet saw ('the vision,' *v.* 13), and what he depicted by his symbolic actions was to affect the whole population. At *v.* 15 we come back to the threefold form of destruction which has been announced before (v. 2, 12: vi. 12), while the language used here of the sword and of the famine corresponds to that in Jeremiah (xiv. 18). The comparison of the mourning remnant of the people to mourning doves (cp. Is. xxxviii. 14: lix. 11) does not seem to have occurred in all the ancient Hebrew copies (see the Septuagint), but it is a very natural comparison, and the dove is said to build its nest in the sides of the *wadys*. The flight to the mountains is recommended in similar circumstances by our Lord (Matt. xxiv. 16). The feebleness of the hands in times of trouble is a commonplace with the prophets (Is. xiii. 7: Jer. vi. 24: cp. Is. xxxv. 3: Heb. xii. 12), and the whole of this verse is repeated later (xxi. 7). The phrase 'weak as water,' which has become proverbial with us, implies instability, the lack of power to stand firm. Accompanying this weakness there were to be outward forms of repentance, the sackcloth (cp. Is. xv. 2, 3: Lam. ii. 10: Jer. xlviii. 37: xlix. 3, etc.), the baldness (cp. Deut. xiv. 1), and so on. The horror (Ps. lv. 5) is the shuddering of dread at what was to befal them. There would also be no satisfaction for them in the possession of wealth (Prov. xi. 4: Zeph. i. 18): it would give no gratification mental or bodily: in the past it had led them into sin (cp. 1 Tim. vi. 10), and, because of this, it would be looked upon as an unclean thing and therefore to be rejected. 'The stumbling block of their iniquity' is a phrase which recurs in this book (xiv. 3, 4, 7: xliv. 12).

20–27. If we accept the translation of the text, the prophet now turns to the temple, for that is what is meant by 'the beauty of his ornament,' but the expression is an anomalous one. On the other hand, if we accept the marginal renderings, the prophet is still speaking of the gold and silver of *v.* 19 which had

21 And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a
prey, and to the wicked of the earth for a spoil; and they
22 shall profane it. My face will I turn also from them, and
they shall profane my [1]secret *place*: and robbers shall
23 enter into it, and profane it. Make the chain: for the
land is full of [2]bloody crimes, and the city is full of
24 violence. Wherefore I will bring the worst of the heathen,
and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the
pride of the strong to cease; and [3]their holy places shall
25 be profaned. [4]Destruction cometh; and they shall seek
26 peace, and there shall be none. Mischief shall come upon
mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; and they
shall seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish

[1] Or, *secret* treasure [2] Heb. *judgement of blood.* [3] Or, *they that sanctify them* [4] Or, *Distress*

been used for idolatrous purposes (cp. xvi. 17) and therefore was now treated by Jehovah as unclean. The Temple, and not merely Jerusalem as a whole, seems certainly to be indicated by the word translated 'my secret *place*' (marg. *treasure*). The language, though obscure, points to the Holy of Holies in the Temple, which was the secret dwelling-place of Jehovah. The expression 'Make the chain' (*v.* 23) is a very doubtful one: the word for 'chain' only occurs again, and there not very certainly, in 1 K. vi. 21. Here, if it is read rightly, it must mean that, just as the prophet was to lay siege against the city, so he was to prepare chains for the inhabitants to be led away into captivity. Various emendations of the text have been suggested but none are convincing. The Septuagint translate 'and they shall cause disorder.' The picture of the internal disorder and violence in the land and in Jerusalem is just such as we have of the state of things during the final siege of the city in 70 A.D. The 'bloody crimes' are those which involved the punishment of death. 'Their holy places' (*v.* 24) certainly represents a better reading of the Hebrew than 'they that sanctify them' (*marg.*). In later times the plural is used instead of the singular: so we have 'the sanctuaries of the Lord's house' (Jer. li. 51), and 'the sanctuaries of God' (Ps. lxxiii. 17, where R.V. has the singular); by this use the various divisions of the sacred buildings are indicated. We have another unique word in that used to express 'destruction' (*marg.* 'distress'). Judging by the use of the kindred verb in the expression 'I have rolled up like a weaver my life' (Is. xxxviii. 12), *final* destruction is intended by the word. 'Mischief' (*v.* 26: cp. Is. xlvii. 11) is here used in the sense of 'disaster.' The resort to the wise persons of the land—the prophet, the priest (cp. Mal. ii. 7),

27 from the priest, and counsel from the ancients. The king shall mourn, and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

C. A SERIES OF VISIONS AND PROPHECIES COMMENCING 591 B.C. CHAPTERS VIII.—XIX.

xv. *The first of a series of visions* (viii.–xi.)*:—the vision of God carries the prophet off in spirit to see various forms of false worship in Jerusalem:—*(*a*) *the image of jealousy* (*vv.* 3–6)*;* (*b*) *animal worship* (*vv.* 10–12)*;* (*c*) *Tammuz worship* (*v.* 14)*;* (*d*) *sun-worship* (*v.* 16). viii.

It is a question how far, if the Hebrew text is right, these visions fell within the period during which the prophet was to lie, first upon his left side and afterwards upon his right side. If the Greek reckoning is right (see note on viii. 1), they would fall outside that period.

VIII. 1 And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that 2 the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and, lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire; from the

and the ancients or elders—comes too late. The prophecy concludes with the same burden as those that have gone before (see vi. 7). The use of the title of 'king' has been objected to in *v.* 27, because elsewhere (e.g. here and in xii. 10) Ezekiel calls Zedekiah 'prince,' and also because the clause mentioning 'the king' does not occur in the Septuagint, but there seems to be no particular reason why the prophet should not have used both. The word used for 'prince' may perhaps imply a dependent ruler: but it is noticeable that both words are also used of the future David to whom Ezekiel looks forward (cp. e.g. xxxiv. 23 with xxxvii. 24).

VIII. 1–6. A SECOND PERIOD OF VISIONS AND PROPHECIES. In *v.* 1 the sixth year is the sixth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity (i. 2), and the date is one year and two months (or, one month, in the Greek version) after the previous

appearance of his loins and downward, fire: and from his loins and upward, as the appearance of brightness, [1]as the
3 colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the gate of the inner *court* that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.
4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the [2]appearance that I saw in the plain.
5 Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward of the gate

[1] Or, *as amber to look upon* [2] Or, *vision*

date, i.e. B.C. 591. The day of the month is the same in both cases. Here the elders of Judah are present; elsewhere in this book (e.g. xx. 1) they are called the elders of Israel (*v. inf.* p. 37). Just in the same way Elisha sat in his house in Samaria during the siege 'and the elders sat with him' (2 K. vi. 32). While there the hand of the Lord comes upon him as it did before (i. 3). The description is the same as in i. 4, 27. The hand is put forth as in ii. 9 (cp. Dan. v. 5) and it carries off the prophet (cp. Bel and Dragon 36: Acts viii. 39) in the visions of God (i. 1: cp. 2 Cor. xii. 1–4) to Jerusalem, where, in spirit, the prophet was carried from place to place (*vv.* 7, 14, 16: xi. 1, 24). He was first taken 'to the door of the gate of the inner court' which seems to be different from 'the door of the court.' 'The image of jealousy' is the image of some deity which provoked the jealousy of Jehovah (cp. esp. Ex. xxxiv. 14 'for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God' and Deut. xxxii. 16, 21). The image took the form of a statue of a god. What god this was is not at all certain. It has been identified with the 'Chiun' of Amos (v. 26) and that with the Babylonian Kaiwan, the analogue to Saturn (*Encycl. Bib.* art. 'Chiun'), but this identification cannot be regarded as at all certain. Others have identified it with Astartê. At the door the prophet enters into the presence of the glory of God, which was manifested in the same way as he had seen it before in the plain (see iii. 22, 23: and cp. i. 28). As he stands at the door that looks towards the north he is bidden to look in that direction that he may see inside the gate or porch (*v.* 16), which admits to the altar, the image of jealousy standing at the entrance. The worship of this image is the first abomination that he sees in his visions, but he is to see others beside which defiled the sanctuary, and of

6 of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. And he
said unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even
the great abominations that the house of Israel do commit
here, [1]that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but
7 [2]thou shalt again see yet other great abominations. And
he brought me to the door of the court; and when I
8 looked, behold a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me,
Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged
9 in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in,
10 and see the wicked abominations that they do here. So I
went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping
things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the
house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about.

[1] Or, *to get them far off* [2] Or, *turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations* So also in vv. 13, 15.

which he had already been told to speak (v. 11). These would cause the withdrawal of the presence of God from His sanctuary. The words here (*v.* 6) perhaps suggested the 'Let us depart hence' which was said to have been heard in the Temple during the last siege of Jerusalem by the Romans (Josephus, *B. J.* VI. 5, 3: Tac. *Hist.* v. 13).

7–12. In order that he may see all, the prophet is brought from 'the door of the gate of the inner court' to 'the door of the court' itself. Here there was a hole in the wall, which was apparently an adobe wall, for the prophet was to dig in it (cp. xii. 5), till he found a door through which he was to go into a dark (*v.* 7) chamber decorated as to its walls with forbidden subjects (Ex. xx. 4: cp. Rom. i. 23). These decorations had no doubt been derived from Babylon (cp. xxiii. 14, 15), where the walls were covered with such pictures painted in vermilion (cp. Jer. xxii. 14). In this chamber illicit worship was carried on by the elders in their recognized number, seventy (Ex. xxiv. 1: Num. xi. 16). They are called 'the elders of the house of Israel,' perhaps to distinguish them from 'the elders of Judah' (*v.* 1) who were with Ezekiel in captivity. In this book the word Israel is used for the whole people of God generically; Judah and Israel together make up this same people (e.g. iv. 5, 6); whilst Judah is limited in one place to 'Judah in Jerusalem' (xxi. 20) and in other places in the appendix to the book (e.g. xlviii. 7) Judah is the old tribal name. Though he does not use the name in other places (e.g. xiv. 1 the elders of Israel), yet in this particular passage 'Judah' is the name given to the captives with Ezekiel to designate that they were captives from the Kingdom of Judah as distinguished from the Kingdom of

11 And there stood before them seventy men of the elders of
the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood
Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer
in his hand; and the odour of the cloud of incense went
12 up. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen
what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark,
every man in his chambers of imagery? for they say, The
LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the [1]earth.

[1] Or, *land*

Israel. The chief of these elders was Jaazaniah (or, Jechoniah) the son of Shaphan, and it is a curious coincidence, that the name Shaphan is identical with the name of one of the unclean animals of Lev. xi. 5: Deut. xiv. 7, the coney or rockbadger (R.V. *marg.*), which was perhaps figured on the walls of the chamber. Building upon this Robertson Smith (*Journal of Philology*, IX. 97) saw a survival of the family worship of a totemistic character. But there is scarcely sufficient ground for this theory, especially when we remember that other names, not of families or clans, existed at the same time which were identical with the names of animals, Achbor (='mouse'), Huldah (='weasel'). While we remember the worship that had crept in of the brazen serpent (2 K. xviii. 4), we can scarcely imagine that such worship could have been carried on for any length of time, but must rather suppose that it was a recrudescence in a time of despair and fanaticism, brought about by the parlous state of society and religion, and induced by a knowledge of the temple buildings of Babylonia. Cheyne, who wishes to look always, if possible, to North Arabia, considers the worship here described to be an importation from North Arabian heathenism, and would have us read *v.* 10 as mentioning all the idols of the house of Ishmael (*not* Israel), but this idea does not seem to win acceptance. This Shaphan may or may not be the same as the Shaphan of 2 Kings (xxiii. 1–14) who is credited with a son Ahikam (*v.* 12) who was the father of Gedaliah, the governor of the remnant of the people in the land of Judah, and also with a son Gemariah (Jer. xxxvi.), and a son named Elasah (Jer. xxix. 3). The excuse given for the introduction of this worship, and put into the mouth of the elders, is that Jehovah had ceased to pay any heed to them and had deserted them, which was made an excuse also for every kind of wrong-doing (ix. 9: cp. Is. xxix. 15, where the expression may be noticed 'their works are in the dark'). This second abomination is expressly stated not to have been practised actually so much in the Temple as in secret in men's private domestic chapels for false worship (*v.* 12), though of course the Temple usage (*v.* 7) formed the model upon which they based their secret devotions.

13 He said also unto me, Thou shalt again see yet other
14 great abominations which they do. Then he brought me
to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which was
toward the north; and behold, there sat the women
15 weeping for Tammuz. Then said he unto me, Hast thou
seen *this*, O son of man? thou shalt again see yet greater
16 abominations than these. And he brought me into the
inner court of the LORD'S house, and behold, at the door
of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the
altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs
toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the
17 east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. Then
he said unto me, Hast thou seen *this*, O son of man? Is

13, 14. But the prophet had not yet seen all. This time he is taken to the door of the gate of the Temple itself, where 'sat the women weeping for Tammuz.' Tammuz (in Babylonian, Dumuzi), or Adonis, the Greek form given to Adonai (i.e. my lord), was originally the Babylonian Sun-god, cut off in his prime by death, and mourned for by Istar who descended into the lower world to try and bring him back. In later mythology Tammuz became the Babylonian god of vegetation, who died every year at the end of the summer and came to life again in the following spring. Every year the date of the death and funeral of Tammuz was made a time of lamentation such as is here described. This worship, then, is another importation from Babylon. (For other ideas about this annual mourning see Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, pp. 391, 392.) Tammuz is not mentioned by name again in the Bible, but there is a doubtful reference to the same god in Isaiah (xvii. 10): 'thou plantest plantings of Adonis' (R.V. *marg.*). For a specimen of the wailing dirges for Tammuz, see *Encycl. Bib.* art. 'Tammuz.'

15, 16. But the end is not yet. The further within the Temple the prophet is taken the greater are the abominations which he sees. He is now introduced into the inner court of the Lord's house, where, at the door of the Temple between the porch and the altar (cp. Joel ii. 17), the worship of the sun was being carried on by about 25 men, who are perhaps to be identified with the 25 men mentioned later (xi. 1). This worship seems to have been one of the most popular forms of idolatry in the later days of the kingdom (cp. vi. 6: 2 K. xxiii. 5). Sun-worship may have been introduced either from Egypt or from Babylonia.

17, 18. A still further form of idolatry is indicated by the expression 'they put the branch to their nose' (*v.* 17), unless this is part of the ritual of the worship of the sun, or, still more probably, of Tammuz (Adonis); but nothing

it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have turned again to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.
18 Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

xvi. *The second vision: one of destruction.* ix. 1–11.

IX. 1 Then he cried in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, [1]Cause ye them that have charge over the city to draw near, every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.
2 And behold, six men came from the way of the upper gate, which lieth toward the north, every man with his [2]slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man in the midst of them clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn [3]by his

[1] Or, *Draw ye near that &c.* [2] Or, *battle axe* [3] Heb. *upon his loins.*

certain can be said about it. The same rite is probably alluded to in Isaiah (xvii. 10), where we meet with the expression 'strange slips' (*margin*, 'vine slips of a strange god'). The Hebrew word for 'slips' and 'branch' (in this passage) is the same. The branch must have been noticeable for its acceptable scent, either as it was growing or when burnt. An illustration from Cyprus is given by Toy (*Ezekiel*, p. 112) of worshippers of Adonis holding flowers to their noses. The Greek translation, however, supports quite a different interpretation of the passage, viz. that all these idolatrous worshippers were like an ill savour going up before God, provoking Him to anger. But whether this be another form of idolatry, or part of one of the previous rites, the conclusion is the same. Pitiless punishment (v. 11, 13) is to overtake them; the cry for mercy, however loud, will be too late (cp. Pr. i. 26–28: Is. i. 15: Mi. iii. 4).

IX. 1–11. The prophet now sees in his vision the destruction that is to come actually being wrought upon the people. It begins, if we accept the rendering of R.V. *marg.*, which is to be preferred, with a loud cry to what are evidently intended to be taken as a body of six destroying angels. The existence of such destroying angels is constantly asserted in the Bible. A destroying angel destroyed the people after David's numbering of them (2 Sam. xxiv. 16: 1 Chr. xxi. 15; cp. 'the destroyer' of Exod. xii. 23

side. And they went in, and stood beside the brasen
3 altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up
from the cherub, whereupon it was, to the threshold of the
house: and he called to the man clothed in linen, which
4 had the writer's inkhorn [1]by his side. And the LORD said
unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the
midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of
the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that
5 be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in
mine hearing, Go ye through the city after him, and smite:
6 let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay [2]utterly
the old man, the young man and the maiden, and little
children and women: but come not near any man upon
whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then
they began at the [3]ancient men which were before the

[1] Heb. *upon his loins.* [2] Heb. *to destruction.* [3] Or, *elders*

and 1 Cor. x. 10). A destroying angel smote Sennacherib's host in the reign of Hezekiah (2 K. xix. 35: 2 Chr. xxxii. 21: Is. xxxvii. 36): and such a destroying angel is said to have smitten Herod Agrippa I in the early days of the Christian Church (Acts xii. 23).

The upper gate through which these angels entered the city must be the same as is called 'the upper gate of Benjamin' (Jer. xx. 2: cp. Jer. xxxvii. 13: Zech. xiv. 10), because of its being situated on the side of the city which was close to the Benjamin border. The mention of 'the north' is perhaps an allusion to the constant belief that evil and misfortune came from the north (cp. i. 4: Jer. i. 14). The weapons carried by the 'six men' are described in very general terms and must not be limited to the 'battle axe' (R.V. *margin*). The recording angel is distinct from the six and has his task to do before the work of destruction begins. He also takes part in the vision of the next chapter (x. 2, 6, 7), and is described in language like that in the latter part of Daniel (x. 5: xii. 6, 7). There is not the slightest need to connect this angel with the Babylonian God Nebo, as some would do. In the tabernacle (Ex. xxxix. 38, 39) and therefore presumably in the Temple there was both a golden altar and a brasen altar, and it was near this latter, apparently, that the 'image of jealousy' (viii. 5) stood. As part of his vision the prophet sees the glory of God as if on its way to leave the house. In ordinary times the Shechinah rested upon or between the cherubim that covered the mercy seat upon the ark (Ex. xxv. 18–22: 1 K. viii. 6, 7, 64: cp. x. 4, 18). Judgement was 'to begin at the house of God' (1 Pet. iv. 17: perhaps a conscious reminiscence of

7 house. And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill
the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went
8 forth, and smote in the city. And it came to pass, while
they were smiting, and I was left, that I fell upon my face,
and cried, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all
the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon
9 Jerusalem? Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the
house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the
land is full of blood, and the city full of [1]wresting *of*
judgement: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the
10 [2]earth, and the LORD seeth not. And as for me also, mine
eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will
11 bring their way upon their head. And behold, the man
clothed in linen, which had the inkhorn by his side,
reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast
commanded me.

[1] Or, *perverseness* [2] Or, *land*

the scene here), but there were a certain number to be marked by the angel and to be preserved—those that had remained faithful, and bewailed the wickedness of the city. The Hebrew word for the mark is also the name of the last letter of the alphabet (*tâv*), and early Christian writers have taken pleasure in pointing out that one of the archaic forms of this letter is exactly like a cross, the emblem of salvation from Satan the Destroyer (Apollyon: Rev. ix. 11). Similar marking of the faithful servants of God is described (in language doubtless based upon this passage) in the New Testament Apocalypse (Rev. vii. 3: ix. 4: xiv. 1: xxii. 4), as also of the worshippers of 'the image of the beast' (Rev. xiii. 16, 17: xiv. 9: xx. 4).

The destroying angels were to carry out the pitiless judgement of God, which had already been announced more than once (cp. v. 11). The destruction here described is such as is said to have been inflicted by Nebuchadrezzar (2 Chr. xxxvi. 17). The 'ancient men' are the same as the elders (so R.V. *marg.* and cp. viii. 11, 12). The slaughter of those in the sanctuary would defile it by the presence of dead bodies in its courts, where Ezekiel was left when the destroyers went forth. The prophet's lamentation at the destruction of the people and his intercession for them are similar to his lamentation after the death of Pelatiah (xi. 13).

'Wresting of judgement' (*v.* 9), i.e. perverted judgement (R.V.), is much to be preferred as a rendering of the Hebrew to the marginal rendering 'perverseness.' The excuse given for the disorders of the country is the same as that given for the private idolatrous animal worship of

xvii. *A further stage in the vision of the destruction of the city. It is destroyed by fire taken from the Divine presence, which is a second time fully described.* x. 1–22.

X. 1 Then I looked, and behold, in the firmament
that was over the head of the cherubim, there appeared
above them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance
2 of the likeness of a throne. And he spake unto the man
clothed in linen, and said, Go in between the whirling
wheels, even under the cherub, and fill both thine hands
with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and [1]scatter
3 them over the city. And he went in in my sight. Now
the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, when
the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.
4 And the glory of the LORD mounted up from the cherub,
and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house
was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the
5 brightness of the LORD'S glory. And the sound of the
wings of the cherubim was heard even to the outer court,
6 as the voice of [2]God Almighty when he speaketh. And it
came to pass, when he commanded the man clothed in

[1] Or, *sprinkle* [2] Heb. *El Shaddai*.

the time (viii. 12). The work of destruction in the prophet's vision is concluded by the destroying angel making his report that the divine command had been carried out.

X. The divine presence is manifested more brightly and more in detail than it had been in the previous vision. The details of it are very much the same as in the first vision, where we have the firmament (i. 22), the sapphire stone and the throne (i. 26), the glory of the Lord (i. 28), the sound of the wings like the voice of the Almighty (i. 24), the form of a man's hand (i. 8), the wheels (i. 15), the likeness of the wheels to a beryl (i. 16), the four with one likeness and the wheel within a wheel (i. 16), the motion of the wheels (i. 17), the abundance of eyes (i. 18), the four faces (i. 6), the likeness of each face (i. 10), the motion of the creatures and the wheels (i. 19–21); but the whirling of the wheels, the name cherub or cherubim, the coals of fire (except in simile i. 13), the cloud (cp. 1 K. viii. 10), are fresh details.

The leading angel is now bidden to set fire to the city, the fire to be taken from the Divine presence, thus signifying that the destruction of the city was sanctioned by God. There is a similar casting of fire

linen, saying, Take fire from between the whirling *wheels*, from between the cherubim, that he went in, and stood
7 beside a wheel. And the cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between the cherubim, and took *thereof*, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed in linen, who took it and went
8 out. And there appeared in the cherubim the form of
9 a man's hand under their wings. And I looked, and behold, four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside one cherub, and another wheel beside another cherub: and the appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a [1]beryl
10 stone. And as for their appearance, they four had one
11 likeness, as if a wheel had been [2]within a wheel. When they went, they went [3]upon their four sides: they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked
12 they followed it; they turned not as they went. And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about,
13 *even* the wheels that they four had. As for the wheels,
14 they were called in my hearing, the whirling *wheels*. And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of the cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an

[1] Or, *stone of Tarshish* [2] Heb. *in the midst of.* [3] Or, *towards*

from heaven upon earth in Revelation (viii. 5: where Swete supposes an ultimate reference to the doom of Sodom, Gen. xix. 24). The movement of the outward tokens of the glory of the Lord (*v.* 4) is repeated later in the vision (*vv.* 18, 19). The angel is described as creeping under one of the cherubs and then standing up by one cherub and putting his hand into the space between them to take fire from the other cherub. The word used for 'the whirling wheels' between which the angel goes, includes in it an allusion to the stormy wind (i. 4) and the great rushing (iii. 12), which accompanied the presence of God. This at any rate seems to be the clearest idea to be derived from the narrative (cp. *v.* 2 with *vv.* 6–8), for the form of a man's hand under their wings (*v.* 21: cp. i. 8) is attributed to the cherubim. The notes upon the details of the first vision must be consulted as to the details which correspond in this second vision. By the right side of the house (*v.* 3) is intended the southern side. The additional detail in the third clause of *v.* 11 (cp. *v.* 22)

15 eagle. And the cherubim mounted up: this is the living
16 creature that I saw by the river Chebar. And when the
cherubim went, the wheels went beside them: and when
the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the
earth, the wheels also turned not from beside them.
17 When they stood, these stood; and when they mounted
up, these mounted up with them: for the spirit [1] of the
18 living creature was in them. And the glory of the LORD
went forth from over the threshold of the house, and stood
19 over the cherubim. And the cherubim lifted up their
wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight when
they went forth, and the wheels [2] beside them: and they
stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD'S house;
and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.
20 This is the living creature that I saw under the God
of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were
21 cherubim. Every one had four faces apiece, and every
one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man

[1] Or, *of life* See ch. 1. 21. [2] Or, *over against*

corresponds to what is said in i. 9. In *v.* 13 we have the introduction of the word explained which indicates the whirling of the wheels. A comparison of the two visions shews us what idea the word cherub conveyed to the prophet, for 'the face of the cherub' (*v.* 14) takes the place of 'the face of an ox' (i. 10), whilst at the same time human faces are connected with all four. It is pretty clear from this that the vision of one of the four creatures which the prophet saw corresponded in great measure to the colossal quadrupeds with human faces which in Babylonian architecture guarded the entrances of the temples and were called in Babylonia Kirubu, though what the cherubs in Solomon's Temple were like which are really to be thought of here no one knows. The connection between the words cherub and Kirubu is very doubtful: others connect the former word with the Greek γρύψ, i.e. a griffin. In this second vision (*v.* 15) the prophet identifies the cherubim with the living creatures he had seen in the first (i. 5) by the river Chebar (i. 1: cp. *v.* 20). The movement and direction of the wheels is ascribed to the spirit of the living creature, for 'in them' (*v.* 17) must mean 'in the wheels.' In *v.* 18 the glory of the Lord returns to its first position (*v.* 4), while the movement of the cherubim described here (*v.* 19) is repeated later (xi. 22). The east gate appears again in the next stage of these visions (xi. 1).

It is carefully to be noticed in

22 was under their wings. And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the faces which I saw by the river Chebar, their appearances and themselves; they went every one straight forward.

xviii. *Another stage in the judgements of God. The false teachers are condemned, and one of them, Pelatiah, is smitten with death.* xi. 1–13.

XI. 1 Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold, at the door of the gate five and twenty men; and I saw in the midst of them Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes 2 of the people. And he said unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise iniquity, and that give wicked

both visions that the prophet never asserts that he saw any Divine form. The living creature was *under* the God of Israel (x. 20), just as over it was the likeness of a firmament (i. 22), and over that again a voice (i. 25) and the likeness of a throne (i. 26). It is true that upon the likeness of the throne, as he says, there was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above (i. 26), but this is very indefinite, and can only be taken as anthropomorphic language to indicate that there if anywhere was the Person of the Divine to be found. The whole of this vision is intended to indicate the determination of Jehovah to depart from His Temple, for at the end of this part of the prophet's vision, the cherubim have reached the door of the east gate.

XI. 1–13. The prophet sees in his vision the false counsellors, hears their condemnation, and prophesies against them, and as he prophesies one of them is smitten with death.

In this stage of his visions the prophet is close to the place where the cherubim had stood in his last vision (x. 19), viz. the door of the east gate of the Lord's house—the cherubim had been at the door of the east gate. There he saw five and twenty men, whether the same men as in viii. 16 (where the Septuagint speaks of twenty men) is not clear. Among them there is one named Jaazaniah, but not apparently the same as the Jaazaniah already mentioned (viii. 11), who was in the midst of seventy men. Both alike are called in the Greek Jechoniah, but the one mentioned here is called the son of Azzur, and the name Azzur occurs as that of the father of Hananiah the prophet who died in similar circumstances to Pelatiah in this chapter (see Jer. xxviii.). It may be that Azzur and his sons laid

3 counsel in this city: which say, [1]*The time* is not near to
build houses: this *city* is the caldron, and we be the flesh.
4 Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.
5 And the spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and he said unto
me, Speak, Thus saith the LORD: Thus have ye said, O
house of Israel; for I know the things that come into
6 your mind. Ye have multiplied your slain in this city,
and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.
7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Your slain whom ye
have laid in the midst of it, they are the flesh, and this
city is the caldron: but [2]ye shall be brought forth out of

[1] Or, *Is not* the time *near &c.?* [2] Another reading is, *I will bring you.*

claim to be a family endowed with the gift of prophecy. Of Pelatiah we know nothing but what is recorded in this chapter, and the name was a common one, as was that of his father Benaiah. This whole band of men is denounced as false counsellors and false prophets. Their pronouncement (*v.* 3) is very obscure; it may be that it was intended to imitate the ambiguity of meaning which attached itself to very many heathen oracles. Thus, the first clause is an assertion or a question: two contrary meanings can be accepted according as it is one or the other. If it is an assertion 'The time is not near to build houses,' it may apply to the slaughter that had already taken place (*v.* 6) which had reduced the population, so that there was no need for house building. If it is a question (R.V. *marg.*) 'Is not the time near to build houses?' then the prophecy is intended as an encouragement to the people to look for a withdrawal of the besiegers and for a time of prosperity to ensue. The second clause asserts the importance of these leaders, who are called princes of the people (*v.* 2). The idea which the simile is intended to convey is that as the pot was nothing without the flesh inside, so Jerusalem owed all to its chiefs or leaders. At the same time as the pot protected the flesh from being consumed by the fire, so the walls of Jerusalem were to be a protection to its inhabitants from the Babylonian forces. Therefore the prophet is bidden to announce that God knows what is in their minds, but that in truth it is they who have caused deeds of violence to be done in the city (cp. vii. 23). Those slain are the flesh in the caldron, i.e. in Jerusalem. This comparison to the caldron and the flesh in it is used again by the prophet in 'a parable' (xxiv. 3–13). But all were not to be as the flesh in the caldron; some were to be brought out of the city and handed over into captivity. They had been afraid of the sword (cp. Jer. xlii. 16), but the sword of their enemies should overtake them. This and captivity were to be the judgements of God. The execution of Zedekiah's sons and of a number of the chief people

8 the midst of it. Ye have feared the sword; and I will
9 bring the sword upon you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will bring you forth out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and will execute judgements
10 among you. Ye shall fall by the sword; I will judge you in the border of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the
11 LORD. This *city* shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; I will judge you in
12 the border of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither have ye executed my judgements, but have done after the

of the city is described in 2 Kings (xxv. 7, 18–21: cp. Jer. xxxii. 4: xxxix. 6: lii. 10, 24–27). It actually took place at Riblah, which is described as a border town (Numb. xxxiv. 11).

At the end of *v.* 10 the prophet returns to the burden of his former prophecies: 'ye shall know that I am the Lord' (cp. vi. 7). Here, if the text is right, the words are repeated a second time (*v.* 12): but the repetition of the clause is probably an accidental one on the part of a scribe. 'The ordinances of the nations' were the false worships which had been introduced into the city. In the course of this apostrophe to the house of Israel which the prophet makes in his vision, Pelatiah, one of the princes, dies. Dismay falls upon the prophet as it had done while the destroying angels were accomplishing their work and his ejaculations take almost the same form (cp. ix. 8).

It must be remembered, in connection with all these prophecies, that in Jerusalem there were two parties, one which advocated the maintenance of tributary dependence upon Babylon, and the other which looked rather to Egypt for help and support in its attempts to throw off the yoke of the Babylonian kings. Judah was a kind of buffer state between these two empires, and also a constant cause of war between them. We see, for instance, a great attempt made in Josiah's reign by the Pharaoh called Pharaoh-necoh to compel that king to give up being on the side of Assyria (2 K. xxiii. 29). More is told us of this division of opinion in Jerusalem by Jeremiah. That prophet always advocated friendship with Babylon, and it must have been a great blow to the pro-Babylonian party when Josiah met his death at Megiddo fighting against the Egyptians (2 K. xxiii. 30). It was after the battle of Carchemish in Jehoiakim's reign that the boundary of the Egyptian empire seems to have been set back from the Euphrates to the River of Egypt, i.e. the Wadi-el-'Arîsh.

The princes of this chapter evidently belong to the anti-Babylonian faction who had a firm conviction that the city would be able to resist all Babylonian attacks. It was the

13 [1]ordinances of the nations that are round about you. And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

xix. *The final stage of the vision and the return of the prophet in the spirit to Chaldaea. Judgement must come, and the Divine presence must be withdrawn: but in the future there is to be a time of restoration and spiritual renewal, when God will again be their God.* xi. 14–25.

14 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
15 Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy [2]kindred, and all the house of Israel, all of them, *are they* unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the LORD; unto us is this land given for
16 a possession: therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Whereas I have removed them far off among the nations,

[1] Heb. *judgements*. [2] Heb. *redemption*. See Lev. 25. 25, &c.

anti-Babylonian policy of these princes and rulers that was, humanly speaking, bringing disaster and slaughter upon Jerusalem as typified by the flesh in the caldron. The discord that existed then must have been in a measure like the discord that existed in later times during the final siege of Jerusalem by the Romans when three discordant elements in its population struggled to the death for the mastery.

14–21. The last stage of the present vision is now reached. The existing generation of evildoers is to be punished. The Dispersion will be guarded by Jehovah, and a time of restoration shall come. A reformation in their own land shall follow with the gift of a new heart and a new spirit, so that there will be a regeneration, and the old relation between the people and their God will be re-established.

The brethren spoken of (*v.* 15) are the prophet's fellow-exiles in Babylonia, and so the Hebrew is translated by the LXX, which reads, however, a different Hebrew word. The literal meaning of the Hebrew is 'the men of thy redemption,' which the R.V. interprets 'the men of thy kindred.' Most probably the prophet gives them this title by

and whereas I have scattered them among the countries,
[1]yet will I be to them a sanctuary for a little while in the
17 countries where they are come. Therefore say, Thus saith
the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the peoples, and
assemble you out of the countries where ye have been
18 scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they
shall come thither, and they shall take away all the
detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof
19 from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will
put a new spirit within you; and I will take the
stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart
20 of flesh: that they may walk in my statutes, and keep
mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my

[1] Or, *yet have I been* Or, *and have been*

anticipation, especially as he is about to speak of their restoration to their own land, implying that they were to be redeemed from captivity. We can then compare with it, 'the year of My redeemed is come' (Is. lxiii. 4). 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem' of this passage (*v.* 15) are the anti-Babylonian party who had bidden the others be gone, as having no right to any share in the land and as deserving to be banished from God's presence, who is treated as a local God, whereas it was God who had removed them and was already and would be their refuge and sanctuary in the countries to which they had gone, though they had no visible sanctuary (cp. Rev. xxi. 22). In due time would come their restoration to their own land (xx. 41: xxviii. 25: xxxiv. 13: xxxvi. 24: xxxvii. 21: xxxviii. 8: xxxix. 27). This restoration to their own land was the constant theme of the prophets (e.g. Jer. xxxii. 37). The return was to be accompanied by a purification of the land (xxxvii. 23) from all its abominations, and this was to be accompanied by a regeneration of the people themselves. How thorough this reformation was in post-exilic times, so far at least as false worships were concerned, is well known. Their hearts were to be as one (cp. Jer. xxxii. 39), and each heart not a stony heart that hardened itself against God's word (Zech. vii. 12), but one pulsating with the love of God (cp. xviii. 31: xxxvi. 26), and that could be impressed by His commandments (cf. 2 Cor. iii. 3: 'Ye are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh'; and see Jer. xxxi. 33). In this new life would come the fulfilment of the promise given more than once: 'they shall be My people, and I will be their God' (xiv. 11: xxxvi. 28: Lev. xxvi. 12: Jer. xxiv. 7: xxx. 22: xxxi. 1, 33: xxxii. 38: Rev. xxi. 3). But all

21 people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their way upon their own
22 heads, saith the Lord GOD. Then did the cherubim lift up their wings, and the wheels were [1]beside them; and the
23 glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the
24 city. And the spirit lifted me up, and brought me in the vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.
25 Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the LORD had shewed me.

[1] Or, *over against*

these promises do not exclude the punishment of the wicked: that is still certain (*v.* 21). The words 'the heart of' (*v.* 21) should probably be omitted.

22, 23. The glory of God now takes its departure from His House (cp. x. 19). The mountain to the east of the City must be the Mount of Olives. It is upon this same mountain that in the 'day of the Lord' it is said His feet shall stand (Zech. xiv. 4); and it was from the same Mount that the departure from the earth of the Son of God, in Whom was manifested the glory of God, took place after His rejection by His people.

24, 25. The prophet is brought back in spirit from Jerusalem, as he had been taken thither (viii. 3). The name 'Chaldea' for Babylonia appears here for the first time. The Chaldaeans, in Assyrian Kaldû, in Hebrew Chasdîm, were, at first, a tribe to the south-east of Babylonia. They became the predominant tribe in Babylonia. The first Chaldaean who became king of Babylonia was Nabopolassar whose date was about 625 B.C., a little while before Ezekiel's time. The form Chasdîm connects them with Chesed, one of the sons of Abraham by Milcah, but we need not necessarily suppose that the Hebrew historian looked upon him as the ancestor of the Chasdîm.

The vision ended, the prophet narrates what he had seen to his fellow-captives. But, though they admired the beauty of the prophet's words, it made no lasting impression upon them (cp. xxxiii. 30–33).

xx. *The first of two prophecies, both of which are accompanied by symbolic actions. Transactions done with a view to a going into exile, symbolic of the exile of the remaining inhabitants of Jerusalem to Babylonia.* xii. 1–16.

XII. 1 The word of the LORD also came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of the rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not, which have ears to hear, and hear not; for they are a
3 rebellious house. Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee stuff for [1]removing, and remove by day in their sight; and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their sight: it may be they will [2]consider, though they be
4 a rebellious house. And thou shalt bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight, as stuff for [1]removing: and thou shalt go forth thyself at even in their sight, as when men

[1] Or, *exile* [2] Or, *perceive that they are*

XII. 1–16. The prophet is once again (cp. ii. 3, 5) reminded of the rebellious character of those with whom he has to deal. It is *the* rebellious house (*vv.* 2, 8) above all others (cp. Matt. xiii. 13–15 with its quotation from Is. vi. 9, 10). He is therefore by his actions to indicate the approaching exile of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their prince. He is to prepare for removal into exile and to remove from one place to another with his goods, digging at the same time a hole in the wall through which to pass. This action is to take place in the sight of his companions in exile as in previous cases (iv. 12) and as also in later ones (xxi. 6: xxxvii. 20: xliii. 11). This would give them an opportunity for considering their own rebellious ways, as well as those of their fellow-countrymen. The preparations for removal were to be made by day and the prophet's actual departure was to be made under cover of night. It makes no difference to the symbolism whether the wall to be dug through was that of the prophet's house or of the city or village in which he dwelt. The actual flight of king Zedekiah and his soldiers from Jerusalem did take place by night after the Babylonian army had made a breach in the walls, but the escape was made through a gate by the king's garden (2 K. xxv. 4: Jer. xxxix. 4: lii. 7). The prophet is to cover his face as the king would do, partly in grief, partly to conceal his flight from his subjects. There is also a covert allu-

5 go forth into exile. Dig thou through the wall in their
6 sight, and carry out thereby. In their sight shalt thou bear it upon thy shoulder, and carry it forth in the dark; thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground: for I have set thee for a sign unto the house of Israel.
7 And I did so as I was commanded: I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for removing, and in the even I digged through the wall with mine hand; I brought it forth in the dark, and bare it upon my shoulder in their
8 sight. And in the morning came the word of the LORD
9 unto me, saying, Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, What doest thou?
10 Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: This [1]burden *concerneth* the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of
11 Israel [2]among whom they are. Say, I am your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: they shall
12 go into exile, into captivity. And the prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder in the dark, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out

[1] Or, *oracle* [2] Or, *that are among them*

sion to the fact that the king would not see the land to which he was to be carried captive. All his actions were to be a sign, just as the laying siege to Jerusalem portrayed upon a tablet was a sign also (iv. 3). The prophet carries out his instructions to the letter (cp. xxiv. 18: xxxvii. 7), and, we are led to suppose (*v.* 9), is asked the meaning of what he is doing (cp. xxiv. 19: xxxvii. 18). The next morning he is bidden to explain all that he has done to his companions. The explanation he gives is called a 'burden' or 'oracle.' The word in the Hebrew means simply an utterance, from the idea of lifting up the voice. As the root from which the word is derived meant to lift up a burden as well as to lift up the voice, and, further, as the utterances to which the word is applied in prophecy (e.g. constantly in Isaiah) generally though not always conveyed the idea of punishment or affliction, the use of the word 'burden' can readily be understood. For the use of the word 'prince' as applied to the king of Judah, see note on vii. 27. The words (*v.* 10) 'among whom they are' (*marg.* 'that are among them') do not convey any obvious meaning, and point to a probable corruption of the text. In *v.* 11 the prophet describes himself as the representative of the Israelites just as he is said to be later (xxiv. 24). The prince is Zedekiah who escaped from the city by night in shame and

thereby: he shall cover his face, because he shall not see
13 the [1]ground with his eyes. My net also will I spread upon
him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring
him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he
14 not see it, though he shall die there. And I will scatter
toward every wind all that are round about him to help
him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after
15 them. And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I
shall disperse them among the nations, and scatter them
16 through the countries. But I will leave a few men of
them from the sword, from the famine, and from the
pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations
among the nations whither they come; and they shall
know that I am the LORD.

xxi. *A second symbolic action to indicate the times of famine and distress that would ensue upon the captivity.* xii. 17–20.

17 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
18 Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy
19 water with trembling and with carefulness; and say unto
the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning

[1] Or, *land*

confusion of face, and whose flight was to end in a land which he would not see because of his having been blinded.

The net is, as elsewhere, the net of captivity (xvii. 20: xix. 8: xxxii. 2). Zedekiah did not see Babylon because his eyes were put out at Riblah (2 K. xxv. 7: Jer. lii. 11), probably because of his attempt to throw off his state of vassalage. His army broke up in the plain of Jericho (2 K. xxv. 5), and no doubt was decimated by its pursuers (cp. *v.* 14 with v. 2). Twice again the burden of the prophecy is taken up: 'they shall know that I am the Lord' (*vv.* 15, 16: cp. vi. 7). But still a remnant was to survive, who in their repentance would own to the abominations which they had committed.

17–20. Another symbolic action, similar to that in iv. 9–11, 16, 17, to indicate the want that should ensue upon the desolation of the land by Nebuchadrezzar's armies. The cause of this desolation is assigned to the previous lawlessness of

the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from [1]all that is therein, because of the violence of all
20 them that dwell therein. And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be a desolation; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

xxii. *Two popular sayings, one of them being in the form of a proverb, are stated and declared to be false. God's word is declared to be sure and immutable and no further delay is to be expected. The fulfilment is at hand.* xii. 21–28.

21 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
22 Son of man, what is this proverb that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision
23 faileth? Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The days are

[1] Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

the inhabitants (vii. 11, 23) and it is not limited to Jerusalem: it is to spread all over the land (vi. 6), with the consequence so often already expressed: 'they shall know that I am the Lord' (vi. 7). The word 'carefulness' (*v.* 18) is here used as equivalent to 'anxiety' (cp. 1 Cor. vii. 32 A.V.).

21–25. A popular saying is here repeated as in xviii. 2, 3. The word translated 'proverb' means any pointed saying, as in 1 Sam. x. 12: xxiv. 13. This saying had evidently been used to discredit the prophecies of the prophets, just as it is announced should be the case 'in the last days' (2 Pet. iii. 3, 4). The exact contrary of the proverb, which is no more to be used, is set forth. The 'word' (*v.* 23 *marg.*) explaining every vision is to have its accomplishment. Vain visions and flattering divinations which had been uttered by false prophets (xiii. 1–7) were to be put an end to. A prevalent form of delusion is indicated by the recurrence of the subject in the succeeding prophecies, for men thought that the time had lengthened out without any fulfilment of that which had been uttered. Similar experiences had befallen Jeremiah (v. 13: xvii. 15). God's word is to have its due effect, and the result of it is not to be deferred (cp. Isa. xiii. 22: lv. 11). The word 'divination' implies either idolatrous or false prophets. Deluding popular sayings have prevailed in all ages.

24 at hand, and the [1]effect of every vision. For there shall
be no more any vain vision nor flattering divination
25 within the house of Israel. For I am the LORD; I will
speak, and the word that I shall speak shall be performed;
it shall be no more deferred: for in your days, O rebellious
house, will I speak the word, and will perform it, saith the
Lord GOD.

26 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
27 Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The
vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he
28 prophesieth of times that are far off. Therefore say unto
them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: There shall none of my
words be deferred any more, but the word which I shall
speak shall be performed, saith the Lord GOD.

xxiii. *A denunciation of the false prophets and prophetesses in three separate pronouncements; two referring to the prophets, the third to the prophetesses.* xiii. 1–7: xiii. 8–16: xiii. 17–23.

XIII. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of
Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that

[1] Heb. *word.*

'Vox populi, vox Dei,' 'Seeing is believing,' will furnish specimens of such proverbial expressions.

26–28. Another form of delusion was that the prophecy was indeed true, though its fulfilment need not be looked for except in the distant future. This the prophet deals with very summarily. It is a delusion that often recurs (cp. Am. vi. 3: 2 Pet. iii. 4). One caution must, however, be given. The prophecy may have its immediate fulfilment, but that by no means always exhausts the meaning it is capable of. Just as in our Lord's discourses His eschatological prophecies had a partial fulfilment in the final siege and fall of Jerusalem, but also look forward to a future and greater fulfilment and the words referring to each cannot be precisely discriminated, so no doubt many of the prophetical utterances of the Old Testament had a fulfilment beyond that which the prophet himself understood, and have a much wider range, with lessons and warnings for all time.

XIII. 1–7. THE FIRST OF TWO DENUNCIATIONS OF THE FALSE PROPHETS WHO HAD BEEN COWARDS AND LIARS. Their prophecies were their

prophesy out of their own heart, Hear ye the word of the
3 LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD: Woe unto the foolish
prophets, that follow their own spirit, [1]and have seen
4 nothing! O Israel, thy prophets have been like foxes in
5 the waste places. Ye have not gone up into the [2]gaps,
neither made up the fence for the house of Israel, to stand
6 in the battle in the day of the LORD. They have seen
vanity and lying divination, that say, The LORD saith; and
the LORD hath not sent them: and they [3]have made men

[1] Or, *and* things which *they have not seen* [2] Or, *breaches*
[3] Or, *have hoped*

own inventions ('out of their own heart': cp. *v.* 17: Jer. xxiii. 16, 26) and expressed their own wishes and desires. They professed to have had visions but had not really seen anything. This prophecy is in alternate verses addressed to the people (*vv.* 4, 6) and to the prophets (*vv.* 5, 7). These are compared to the foxes (or, perhaps, jackals, cp. Lam. v. 18) wandering about in the twilight on the ruins of a fallen city and by burrowing in them helping to increase still further the devastation. No doubt from the days of Jehoiakim, if not from still earlier times, the fortifications of Jerusalem had suffered serious injury, even though the city was still able to stand a siege. The prophets are also reproached for not sharing in the defence of the city against its enemies (cp. xxii. 30). In reality they had no divine mission and no divine revelation (cp. xxii. 28) to communicate. They were 'foolish' (*v.* 3). The adjective is identical with the name Nabal (1 S. xxv. 25). In the later Hebrew the word may be taken to include lewdness (see new *Oxf. Heb. Dict.*), and the moral condition of the prophets of Jerusalem is described in very strong language by Jeremiah (xxiii. 14: xxix. 23). The discussion of the false prophet's position and powers is one of no little difficulty as we have very few data to go upon. It seems indubitable that at the time of the fall of Jerusalem there were numbers of false prophets to be found in the city. The following interesting extract from a volume on *Inspiration* by the late Dr F. Watson (S.P.C.K. 1906) will tell us all perhaps that we can safely gather from the information at our disposal.

'There were false prophets as well as true in Israel, and what is almost of more importance, prophets of a lower as well as of a higher inspiration. Some prophets spake out of their own heart; of some it is said that they were even inspired by a lying spirit from the Lord; of some that God had not sent them. There are cupboard prophets, whom Micah describes as walking in the wind and falsehood, and prophesying of wine and strong drink. There was a large prophetic class or order, and, as Professor Sanday says, "Where there

7 to hope that the word should be confirmed. Have ye not
seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying
divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith; albeit I have
not spoken?

8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye have
spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am
9 against you, saith the Lord GOD. And mine hand shall be
against the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies:
they shall not be in the [1]council of my people, neither
shall they be written in the [2]writing of the house of Israel,
neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye
10 shall know that I am the Lord GOD. Because, even
because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and
there is no peace; and when one buildeth up [3]a wall,

[1] Or, *secret* [2] Or, *register* [3] Or, *a slight wall*

is a professional class there are sure to be professional failings." "There would be small natures among them as well as great. They would be apt to fall into conventional and unreal ways of speaking." It is plain that not all the words of the prophets contained in Holy Scripture have the same abidingness or spiritual power....And it is plain that prophecy, like all institutions in which man has a substantial part, was liable to fall into utter corruption. Jeremiah had no greater or more dangerous enemies than the prophets of his time' (pp. 137, 8).

'The day of the Lord' is an expression constantly recurring in the Old Testament to indicate the time of Divine Punishment. From there it found its way into the New Testament (e.g. 'the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night,' 1 Thess. v. 2): see Introd. p. xxxvi.

8–16. A SECOND DENUNCIATION OF THE FALSE PROPHETS, INCLUDING IN IT THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THEIR COMING DESTRUCTION. Just as the Lord had declared Himself against Jerusalem (v. 8) and afterwards declares Himself against the land of Israel (xxi. 3), against Tyre (xxvi. 3), against Zidon (xxviii. 22), against Pharaoh (xxix. 3: xxx. 22), against the shepherds of Israel (xxxiv. 10), against Mount Seir (xxxv. 3), and against Gog (xxxviii. 3), so here He declares Himself against the false prophets. They are to be cast out altogether from the assembly, struck off the register (R.V. *marg.*), i.e. the list of those of genuine Jewish birth (cp. in the N.T. the mention of the names of those of the spiritual Israel, which are recorded in the Book of Life, Phil. iv. 8, and Swete on Rev. iii. 5), and not to be allowed to return to their country

11 behold, they daub it with untempered *mortar*: say unto
them which daub it with untempered *mortar*, that it shall
fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great
12 hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it. Lo,
when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you,
Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?
13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend it
with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an
overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in
14 fury to consume it. So will I break down the wall that ye
have daubed with untempered *mortar*, and bring it down
to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be
discovered: and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed
in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I am the
15 LORD. Thus will I accomplish my fury upon the wall, and
upon them that have daubed it with untempered *mortar*;
and I will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they
16 that daubed it; *to wit*, the prophets of Israel which
prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions
of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord GOD.

17 And thou, son of man, set thy face against the

(cp. xx. 38). Such a punishment of a prophet of the captivity is foretold in the case of Shemaiah by Jeremiah (xxix. 30–32). Here the refrain 'ye shall know that I am the Lord' (see vi. 7) is caught up again from xii. 20. The reason for their expulsion is the deceit they have used towards the people. The utterance of a message of peace when there was no peace is made a common cause of complaint by the true prophets, by Jeremiah (vi. 14) and Micah (iii. 5) as well as by Ezekiel. The effect of endeavouring to encourage the people in the belief in peace and prosperity is compared to the effect of a man trying to strengthen a slight wall (R.V. *marg.*) with untempered mortar (or perhaps the word may mean dry clay which would crack; cp. xxii. 28). The result, in the case of the wall, is that in a time of stress and storm it will fall and its foundations will be laid open. So all the false hopes that the false prophets have built up will be shattered; and people will see the feeble character of their work, when the unreality of it all shall be exposed by the storm-like attack of the Babylonians. The final result will be the assertion of God's power and glory: once again the refrain comes in 'ye shall know that I am the Lord.'

17–23. DENUNCIATION OF THE PROPHETESSES. In this section the prophet is directed to turn his

daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own
18 heart; and prophesy thou against them, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Woe to the women that sew pillows upon all [1]elbows, and make kerchiefs for the head of

[1] Heb. *joints of the hands.*

attention to the false prophetesses. Prophetesses had been recognized at various times in the history of the people. Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron is called a prophetess (Ex. xv. 20); Deborah a prophetess judged Israel in the time of Barak; Huldah the prophetess was consulted after the discovery of 'the book of the law' in Josiah's reign, and gave a prophetic utterance concerning the future (2 K. xxii. 14–20: 2 Chr. xxxiv. 22–28). An anonymous prophetess was the mother of Isaiah's son Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Is. viii. 3), and, not many years after this denunciation of the prophetesses, a prophetess Noadiah with 'the rest of the prophets' was amongst the opponents of Nehemiah when a conspiracy was made against him by Tobiah and Sanballat, and would have put him in fear (Neh. vi. 14). We still find prophetesses existing in New Testament times. Anna a prophetess was present when our Lord was brought into the Temple at the purification of the Blessed Virgin (Lk. ii. 36). Philip the evangelist 'had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy' (Acts xxi. 9: cp. 1 Cor. xi. 5). One false prophetess is mentioned (Rev. ii. 20) as being at Thyatira, 'the woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess.' These false prophetesses of Ezekiel's time did like the prophets. They followed their own imaginations and their own wishes, and therefore the prophet was to oppose them.

18. *Pillows, kerchiefs*] The meaning and intention of the feminine practices here described is very obscure. The words themselves are of doubtful signification. That rendered 'pillows' (כְּסָתוֹת), in accordance with the meaning of the word in later Hebrew, more probably means 'bands' or 'fillets' sewn on to the robes after the fashion of the 'phylacteries' of the New Testament (Mt. xxiii. 5). In fact in the Hexapla the Hebrew word is represented by φυλακτήρια and Ephraem Syrus makes it equivalent to some sort of charm or amulet. If we take the Hebrew literally as it stands the women are represented as sewing these on the joints of God's hands (R.V. *marg.*), as if it were to prevent Him from touching them. But this seems scarcely reasonable, and a much more natural interpretation is to suppose that the women sewed these amulets on the wrists of the garments of those who consulted them to shew to whom they belonged. The other word (מַסְפָּחוֹת) translated 'kerchiefs,' seems to be of equally uncertain meaning and may perhaps indicate veils or wimples, which perhaps were used to shelter the persons who wore them from the influences of evil spirits or from the evil eye; or, still more probably, the language is figurative and implies that they kept them from a percep-

persons of every stature to hunt souls! [1]Will ye hunt the
souls of my people, and save souls alive [2]for yourselves?
19 And ye have profaned me among my people for handfuls
of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that
should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not
live, by your lying to my people that hearken unto lies.
20 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against
your pillows, [3]wherewith ye there hunt the souls [4]to make
them fly, and I will tear them from your arms; and I will
let the souls go, even the souls that ye hunt [4]to make *them*

[1] Or, *Ye hunt...and ye save &c.* [2] Or, *that are yours*
[3] Or, *where ye hunt* [4] Or, *as birds*

tion of the truth. In both cases the result would be the same. These women would capture these persons and make them believe in their pernicious doctrines, for the word translated 'souls' does not here convey exactly the same idea as the English word. All this was done ostensibly as a part of the worship of the true God. The last part of *v.* 18 is better taken as a statement and not as a question: Ye hunt the souls of my people, and ye save your own souls.

19. In this verse a further charge is made against these women, the false prophetesses. They have profaned God, i.e. His name and therefore His glory, bartering, as it were, His honour in return for the smallest offerings, such as handfuls of barley and pieces of bread (cp. 1 Sam. ii. 36). It was from barley rather than from wheat that the ordinary bread of the people was made. Their operations may have had licentious rites connected with them, but whether this was so or not the result was the opposite to what it ought to have been if they had been true prophetesses. As a consequence of all this Jehovah declares Himself against them, their 'pillows' and their 'kerchiefs.' The words 'to make them fly' (marg. better 'as birds') which occur twice in this verse represent a very doubtful Hebrew word, the first occurrence of which is not recognised by the Septuagint, though Aquila had the word in the text before him in this place. There would seem to have been, as early as Theodotion, another reading of the Hebrew word (from pârak instead of parah) which would give the meaning in both places to snatch them away in the sense of to rescue them (cp. Ps. cxxxvi. 24: Lam. v. 8). The difficulty of the word as it stands is obvious: the meaning given above agrees better with the next verse, for the purpose of God to rescue His people from these women is there indicated. Twice more we have the refrain 'ye shall know that I am the Lord' (cp. vi. 7). The false prophetesses were with the false prophets one of the curses of the time (see note on p. 60). Those who remained faithful were saddened by their lying

21 fly. Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people
out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand
to be hunted; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.
22 Because with lies ye have grieved the heart of the
righteous, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened
the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from
23 his wicked way, [1]and be saved alive: therefore ye shall no
more see vanity, nor divine divinations: and I will deliver
my people out of your hand; and ye shall know that I am
the LORD.

xxiv. *Sundry detached utterances.* xiv. 1–xv. 8.

(*a*) *Concerning idolaters and the prophet who is deceived.* xiv. 1–11.

(*b*) *No human power can deliver the land: yet there shall be a remnant.* xiv. 12–23.

(*c*) *Jerusalem, like the vine branches, given to the fire.* xv. 1–8.

XIV. 1 Then came certain of the elders of Israel
2 unto me, and sat before me. And the word of the LORD

[1] Or, *by promising him life*

utterances, whilst the wicked were encouraged in their wickedness by the example set them (cp. Jer. xxiii. 14). These prophetesses are to be stopped in their career: they were not to be allowed to pursue their calling. Such prophets and prophetesses as are referred to in this chapter seem to have prophesied both in Jerusalem and to the captivity. In *v.* 22 the text gives the meaning better than the margin. For the words used in *v.* 23 see *vv.* 6, 7, and 9.

XIV. 1–11. The elders of Israel, or rather some of them, are here represented as if they were awaiting an oracular utterance (cp. viii. 1). Their motive may have been curiosity or the wish to find some handle of objection against Ezekiel in favour of the false prophets. They are represented as not having any right to make any inquiries at all. They had accepted idol worship: this had become 'the stumblingblock of their ,iniquity' (the same expression occurs in *vv.* 4, 7: vii. 19: xliv. 12). The question asked (*v.* 2) implies a negative answer: but the answer is to correspond to their condition (*vv.* 4, 7). By their idolatrous worship the people had put themselves at a distance from God. With them

3 came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have [1]taken
their idols into their heart, and put the stumblingblock of
their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at
4 all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto
them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Every man of the house of
Israel that taketh his idols into his heart, and putteth the
stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh
to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him [2]therein accord-
5 ing to the multitude of his idols; that I may take the house
of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged
6 from me through their idols. Therefore say unto the house
of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Return ye, and turn
yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from
7 all your abominations. For every one of the house of
Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, which
separateth himself from me, and taketh his idols into his
heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity
before his face, and cometh to the prophet to inquire [3]for
8 himself of me; I the LORD will answer him by myself: and
I will set my face against that man, and will make him an
astonishment, for a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him
off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I
9 am the LORD. And if the prophet be [4]deceived and speaketh
a word, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will

[1] Heb. *caused to come up.* [2] Or, *according thereto* Another reading is, *he is come in the multitude &c.* [3] Or, *of him concerning me* [4] Or, *enticed*

were involved the resident aliens who had settled in the country and accepted the Jewish religion. The prophet is to call all these to repentance. They are to turn their backs upon the idols and to return to God. If they are still idolaters and go to the prophet to inquire as to God's will, an answer of condemnation is to be given to them as coming directly from God. Yet again comes in the refrain 'ye shall know that I am the Lord' (see vi. 7).

9. *a word*] i.e. a prophetical utterance. We are not to suppose that these false prophets had been deceived from the very beginning of their career. Rather it is implied that, as time went on, they had wilfully deceived the people, till at last they had been allowed by Divine Providence to continue their work of deceit. Such seems to have been the mysterious way in which God dealt with those generations. The course implied can be compared

stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from
10 the midst of my people Israel. And they shall bear [1] their
iniquity: the iniquity of the prophet shall be even as the
11 iniquity of him that seeketh *unto him*; that the house of
Israel may go no more astray from me, neither defile them-
selves any more with all their transgressions; but that they
may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the
Lord GOD.

12 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
13 Son of man, when a land sinneth against me by committing
a trespass, and I stretch out mine hand upon it, and break
the staff of the bread thereof, and send famine upon it, and
14 cut off from it man and beast; though these three men,
Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but
their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.
15 If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and

[1] Or, *the punishment of their iniquity*

with the Divine treatment of the Pharaoh of the Exodus. At first he hardens his heart, then God hardens his heart or allows it to remain hardened, and destruction follows, as it does also in the case of the prophets. *Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.* But in the condemnation pronounced here, prophet and inquirer are alike to receive punishment. In this way only will the people be warned and kept straight, and free from pollution (cp. xxxvii. 23). Then indeed they may still hope to be God's people, and that He will be their God as He promises (xi. 20: xxxvi. 28: xxxvii. 23: cp. Lev. xxvi. 12). This was a constant desire and expectation of the prophets of the time. Jeremiah frequently expresses the same promise (cp. Jer. xxiv. 7: xxx. 22: xxxi. 1, 33: xxxii. 38), just as Hosea had done in slightly different language (ii. 23), and Zechariah was to do later (viii. 8: xiii. 9). In the Apocalypse the same idea is taken up: 'they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God... He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son' (Rev. xxi. 3, 7). So St Paul incorporated the same statement in his argument in 2 Corinthians (vi. 16 ff.).

12–20. In these verses we have the limitations expressed that are imposed upon the power of man for good with regard to his fellow men. That such an influence could be exercised is allowed in the account

they [1]spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass
16 through because of the beasts; though these three men
were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver
neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered,
17 but the land shall be desolate. Or if I bring a sword upon
that land, and say, [2]Sword, go through the land; so that I
18 cut off from it man and beast; though these three men
were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver
neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered
19 themselves. Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and
pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man
20 and beast: though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as
I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son
nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by

[1] Or, *bereave* [2] Or, *Let the sword go*

of Abraham's entreaty for Sodom: but the present passage narrows down this power, while the pessimistic author of Ps. xlix. seems to go further still when he says 'None of them can by any means redeem his brother, Nor give to God a ransom for him' (*v.* 7). For the teaching of Ezekiel as to 'trespass' and 'sin,' see Introd. p. xxxiv. Here the land is spoken of instead of its inhabitants and is made to share in the punishment, quite in accordance with what is said in the account of the Fall (Gen. iii. 17, 18). The breaking 'the staff of bread' had already been announced by Ezekiel in earlier prophecies (iv. 16: v. 16: cp. Lev. xxvi. 26). The introduction of the three men is similar to the introduction of other well known persons by Jeremiah (xv. 1): 'Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people.' Of the particular three mentioned here little need be said. They have been taken as standing for types of strugglers against the *world* (Noah), the *flesh* (Daniel) and the *devil* (Job). They had saved others as well as themselves (Heb. xi. 7: Job xlii. 9: Dan. iii. 49). 'Noah was a righteous man' (Gen. vi. 9: cp. vii. 1: Ecclus. xliv. 17), and 'a preacher of righteousness' (2 Pet. ii. 5). Job 'was perfect and upright' (Job i. 1). Doubts have been expressed, but without much basis to go upon, as to whether the Daniel of Ezekiel is the prophet Daniel. Even though the book of Daniel may be of later date, yet it would seem most probable that the Daniel of it was a historical personage of an earlier time. Daniel must, indeed, have been a young man at this time, or, at any rate, not more than in the prime of life: and the insertion of his name here is a striking tribute on the part of Ezekiel to his fellow-captive's character. The placing of his name before Job's is a mere accident: the

21 their righteousness. For thus saith the Lord GOD: How
much more when I send my four sore judgements upon
Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the noisome
beasts, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?
22 Yet, behold, therein shall be left [1]a remnant that shall be
carried forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall
come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their
doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil
that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all
23 that I have brought upon it. And they shall comfort you,

[1] Heb. *they that escape.*

names did not need to be mentioned in chronological order. The mention of Daniel elsewhere by Ezekiel (xxviii. 3: 'behold thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee') seems to point to just such a person as is described in the book of Daniel (i. 17 'as for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams'). There is no need therefore to think of another Daniel than the well-known one. The word translated 'noisome,' i.e. harmful (cp. *v.* 21), is the same as that translated 'evil' elsewhere in this book (v. 17) and 'noisome' is a survival from the A.V. The idea is that the wild beasts were to gain the upper hand, so that men could not live in the country. The adjuration of *vv.* 16, 18, 20 is of common occurrence in this book (cp. v. 11). The sword (*v.* 17) and the pestilence (*v.* 19) have already been mentioned (v. 12) and occur also in a similar passage in Leviticus (xxvi. 25). The various ways in which the prophet plays upon the main string of his idea is noticeable, 'these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job' (*v.* 14), 'these three men' (*v.* 18), 'Noah, Daniel, and Job' (*v.* 20). The pestilence was to be such as occurred after David's sin of numbering the people (2 S. xxiv. 15: 1 Chr. xxi. 14). The words 'in blood' are used in connection with the pestilence as equivalent to 'in the taking of life': for the blood was held to be the life (cp. Gen. ix. 4). Pestilence and blood have already been connected together (v. 17).

This fourfold idea of God's punishment of the world occurs again in Revelation (vi. 8 'there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death [*marg.* pestilence], and by the wild beasts of the earth': cp. 2 Esdr. xv. 5).

22, 23. Still there is hope for a remnant, that hope which constantly asserts itself (cp. vi. 8: xii. 16). It is implied that a remnant from Jerusalem, who, in some mysterious way, would be a comfort to the earlier exiles, are to join those already in captivity. The comfort apparently was to arise from the

when ye see their way and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done [1]without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.

XV. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, 2 saying, Son of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree, the vine branch which [2]is among the trees of the 3 forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to make any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? 4 Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel: the fire hath devoured both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned; 5 is it profitable for any work? Behold, when it was whole, it was [3]meet for no work: how much less, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned, shall it yet be [3]meet 6 for any work? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: As

[1] Or, *in vain* [2] Or, *was* [3] Heb. *made into.*

consciousness that in the captivity God's dealing with His people was justified: for these later exiles would include the most ignorant, most superstitious and most degraded of the people who had been left behind when the former deportations had taken place (2 K. xxiv. 14: and cp. the parable of the very good and the very bad figs in Jer. xxiv.).

XV. 1–8. The comparison of Israel or Jerusalem to a vine is one of constant occurrence in the Old Testament. It occurs again later in this book (xvii. 6: xix. 10–14) and also in Isaiah (v. 1: cp. the parable of the vineyard, Matt. xxi. 33: Mk xii. 1: Lk. xx. 9), but perhaps the similarity to this passage is most striking in Ps. lxxx. (*vv.* 14–16: 'Look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine, And the stock which Thy right hand hath planted, And the branch that Thou madest strong for Thyself. It is burned with fire, it is cut down'); and we are carried on to our Lord's words, 'I am the vine, ye are the branches....If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned' (John xv. 5, 6). The wood of the vine is of no use in itself, not even to make a peg of, but is only fit for fuel. Much less is it of use when it has been burned. So it will be with Jerusalem and its inhabitants: it shall be consumed with fire and come to an end: this will be God's judgement upon it. The prophet may have in his mind here the wild vine or a degenerate cultivated vine rather than the grape-bearing cultivated vine: but the wood of both alike is useless. For the actual destruction of Jerusalem by fire see 2 K. xxv. 9: 2 Chr. xxxvi. 19: Jer.

the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so [1]will I give the inhabitants of
7 Jerusalem. And I will set my face against them; they [2]shall go forth from the fire, but the fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I set
8 my face against them. And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD.

XXV. *A long and elaborate description of the history of Jerusalem.* XVI.

Its development from a poor, humble and heathen origin is described as well as the sore straits and impoverished condition it was in, when God selected it for Himself and bound it to Him by a covenant. His love then adorned it with all manner of glory and beauty, both in situation and in decoration.

XVI. 1 Again the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abomina-
3 tions, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem:

[1] Or, *have I given* [2] Or, *have gone forth*

xxxix. 8, lii. 13. Jeremiah had also prophesied the burning of the city (xxi. 10). The variations of the margin here make these verses an explanation of the Divine purpose in a destruction already past rather than a looking forward to the future. Again the refrain comes in 'ye shall know that I am the Lord' (see vi. 7). The trespass (*v.* 8) here as always was the lapse into idolatry.

XVI. 1–9. The object of this history is to shew the abominations of which Jerusalem has been guilty (cp. xxii. 2), and the account goes back to the city's very foundation and origin. It was Canaanite in genus long before it belonged to the Israelites and was produced from a union of Amorite and Hittite. The Amorite is described as descended from Canaan (Gen. x. 16) as well as Heth, i.e. the Hittite, and both Hivite and Hittite appear among the peoples of the land mentioned which are to be dispossessed (Deut. vii. 1). Some have wished to substitute Hivite here but the assertion of the text is repeated in *v.* 45 and the present reading is as old as the Septuagint version. It is to be noticed that in Gen. x. 15 Heth immediately precedes the Jebusite, who is connected inseparably with Jerusalem (Judg. i. 21), while the Amorite is the very next name in

[1]Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of the Canaanite;
the Amorite was thy father, and thy mother was an Hittite.
4 And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy
navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to
cleanse thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at
5 all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee,
to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in
the open field, for that thy person was abhorred, in the
6 day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee,
and saw thee weltering in thy blood, I said unto thee,
Though thou art in thy blood, live; yea, I said unto thee,
7 *Though thou art* in thy blood, live. I [2]caused thee to
multiply as the bud of the field, and thou didst increase
and wax great, and thou attainedst to [3]excellent ornament;
thy breasts were fashioned, and thine hair was grown; yet

[1] Or, *Thine origin* [2] Heb. *made thee a myriad.*
[3] Heb. *ornament of ornaments.*

order; and there seems no reason to doubt that whilst the main body of the Hittites lived in the north a smaller body of them were amongst the inhabitants of Southern Canaan (see Prof. Sayce in *Expository Times*, March, 1904, p. 280). It may be remembered also, as illustrating this passage, that from an early period the Babylonians described the inhabitants of Palestine as Amurru or Amorite. The earliest history of Jerusalem is described under the image of a pitiful and neglected infant exposed by its mother to death. 'To cleanse thee' (A.V. 'To supple thee') represents a word of doubtful meaning which does not occur elsewhere. It is omitted in the Septuagint, but two of the Greek versions read the word differently and translate 'for safety' or 'salvation.' The salting of the bodies of new-born infants is still practised in Palestine and is believed to harden and strengthen them. Salt has always been looked upon as a preservative, and the practice may have had originally a spiritual meaning as well (cp. Lev. ii. 13 'with all thine oblations thou shalt offer salt'). The word 'weltering' (*vv.* 6, 22) means 'wallowing' or 'rolling about in' and represents, it is interesting to note, the participle of a Hebrew verb with which the name Jebus (cp. Judg. xix. 10) or Jebusite may be connected. The transition from the Canaanite Jerusalem to the Israelite Jerusalem is nowhere clearly defined, perhaps because of the mixed character of the population (cp. Josh. xv. 63: Judg. i. 21: 2 Sam. v. 6); for we may recall in this connection the fact that in David's reign Uriah the Hittite (cp. *v.* 3) had a house in Jerusalem (2 Sam. xi. 9). The times of nakedness

8 thou wast naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee,
and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time
of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy
nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into
a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou
9 becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea,
I throughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I
10 anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered
work, and shod thee with [1]sealskin, and I [2]girded thee
11 about with fine linen, and covered thee with silk. I
decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon

[1] Or, *porpoise-skin* [2] Or, *bound thee with* a tire of *fine linen*

and bareness (*v.* 7) may possibly be an allusion to the sojourn in the wilderness.

At last God took Jerusalem to be His own city: this is described in the figurative language of the spreading the skirt over her (cp. the story of Boaz and Ruth, Ruth iii. 9) and in the formal covenant made between God and the people (cp. the covenant made at Mount Sinai, Ex. xxiv. 7, 8, by which the people became God's people, Ex. xix. 5). The time of entering into the covenant had to be a time of purification (Ex. xix. 10, 14, 15: cp. also Ruth iii. 3 for another possible connection here), while the anointing with the oil signified the dedication or consecration of the people, or of Jerusalem.

10. The beautifying of the city is described in elaborate language. The 'broidered work' (*vv.* 10, 13, 18) reminds us of the forty-fifth psalm (*v.* 14 'She shall be led unto the king in broidered work'), while the 'sealskins' (marg. 'porpoise skins') carry us back to the furniture of the tabernacle (Ex. xxv. 5: xxvi. 14). The exact meaning of the word so translated is uncertain. The old versions made it simply a colour but it is almost certainly the name of an animal. The 'badgers' of the A.V. are derived from the Talmud: but two other alternatives are set before us: (1) that the animal intended was marine, the seal, the porpoise or the sea-cow, all possible animals in the seas near the Arabian peninsula; or (2) that the Hebrew word comes from the Egyptian and simply means leather (*Encycl. Bib.* 456, 457). On the whole one of the marine animals is the most likely, especially as we are told that 'the Arabs of the Sinaitic desert use the skin of *Halicore Hemprichii*, Ehr., a cetacean found in the Red Sea, for making sandals' (Hastings, *Dict. of the Bible*, s. voc. Badger). The word for 'girded' implies a covering for the head, as in the margin (cp. xxiv. 17: Ex. xxix. 9: Lev. viii. 13), and fine linen was used for the high priest's mitre (Ex. xxviii. 39: xxxix. 28: there seems to be no good reason for translating the word 'silk' as in R.V. *marg.*). The word for 'silk' (*vv.* 10, 13) is one of very uncertain meaning and

12 thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a ring
upon thy nose, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful
13 crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold
and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and
broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and
oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst
14 prosper unto royal estate. And thy renown went forth
among the nations for thy beauty; for it was perfect,
through my majesty which I had put upon thee, saith the
Lord GOD.

15 But thou didst trust in thy beauty, and playedst the
harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy
16 whoredoms on every one that passed by; his it was. And
thou didst take of thy garments, and madest for thee high
places decked with divers colours, and playedst the harlot

indicates some delicate material. It occurs nowhere else and the early versions give us no help: the only place in the Bible where silk is certainly mentioned being Rev. xviii. 12.

12–14. The nose-jewel which hung down over the upper lip seems to have been often looked upon as an amulet. We meet with it first in Gen. xxiv. 47, where Abraham's servant places one on Rebekah's nose. The crown expresses the development of Jerusalem into a royal city (cp. *v.* 13). The food mentioned is assigned to Israel elsewhere (Deut. xxxii. 13, 14: cp. Ps. lxxxi. 16). The beauty of Jerusalem was a constant source of glorification, as being known far and wide: 'Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion' (Ps. xlviii. 2); 'Zion, the perfection of beauty' (Ps. l. 2; these two passages are quoted in Lam. ii. 15).

15–34. A further stage is reached in this paragraph. The beauty and favour of the city and its inhabitants made it false to its high calling. The things which should have been for its wealth were unto it an occasion of falling. United by the strongest spiritual ties to her divine Lord, the city lapsed into spiritual fornication. Language of the kind used here represents constantly in the Old Testament the faithlessness of Israel to the Lord (cp. vi. 9, xxiii. *passim*: Ex. xxxiv. 15: Lev. xvii. 7: xx. 5: Deut. xxxi. 16: Judg. ii. 17: Is. i. 21: lvii. 8: Jer. ii. 20: iii. *passim*: Hos. i. 2). The high places (*v.* 16) were made for the licentious revelries and mysteries of the heathen worships. For the decking of them cp. 2 K. xxiii. 7. The last words of *v.* 16 are obscure and have no definite

upon them: *the like things* shall not come, neither shall it
17 be *so*. Thou didst also take thy [1]fair jewels of my gold
and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest for
thee [2]images of men, and didst play the harlot with them;
18 and thou tookest thy broidered garments, and coveredst
them, and didst set mine oil and mine incense before them.
19 My bread also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and
honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou didst even set it before
them for a sweet savour, and *thus* it was; saith the Lord
20 GOD. Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy
daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast
thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Were thy
21 whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my
children, and delivered them up, in [3]causing them to pass

[1] Or, *beautiful vessels* [2] Or, *male images* [3] Or, *setting them apart* Heb. *making them pass over.*

meaning, any more than those of *vv.* 15 ('his it was'), 19 ('and *thus* it was'), though it may be 'his it was' (*v.* 15) means 'thy beauty became the property of everyone that passed by.' In *v.* 19 the word 'thus' is inserted by the translators. The text, however, in all these verses is very uncertain.

The work described in *vv.* 17, 18, 19 corresponds with what is described in other passages (vii. 20: xxiii. 14) but is of a grosser kind. The 'beautiful vessels' of R.V. *marg.* is more literal and a better rendering than 'fair jewels' (*v.* 17: see *v.* 39, xxiii. 26). What should have been God's ('*my* gold and *my* silver,' '*mine* oil and *mine* incense,' '*my* bread': so xxiii. 41, cp. Hos. ii. 8) is devoted to other purposes. The 'images of men' seem to have been images of the heathen gods in human form (cp. Is. xliv. 13), attired in magnificent vestments. In connection with the mention of honey, it may be remembered that under the Levitical Law (Lev. ii. 11) honey was forbidden to be used in the fire offerings. For the sweet savour see vi. 13. Involved in the practice of these rites was the offering of human sacrifices (*vv.* 21, 36: xx. 26, 31: xxiii. 37) to be devoured, not in cannibalistic fashion, but by the fire. These sacrifices to Moloch seem to have been of pretty frequent occurrence in Jerusalem and especially offered by the kings (2 K. xvi. 3: xxi. 6), whose example was afterwards more generally followed. Traces of such sacrifices of children have been found in the recent excavations at Gezer. In this passage God claims the children as his ('*my* children,' *v.* 21), just as much as the gold and silver and other things. All this idolatrous service involved the ignoring of what had been done by God for His people in their early years (cp. *vv.* 43, 60), when Jeru-

22 through *the fire* unto them? And in all thine abominations
and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of
thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and wast
23 weltering in thy blood. And it is come to pass after all
thy wickedness, (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord GOD,)
24 that thou hast built unto thee [1]an eminent place, and hast
25 made thee a lofty place in every street. Thou hast built
thy lofty place at every head of the way, and hast made
thy beauty an abomination, and hast opened thy feet to
every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredom.
26 Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians,
thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast multiplied thy
27 whoredom, to provoke me to anger. Behold therefore, I
have stretched out my hand over thee, and have diminished
thine [2]ordinary *food*, and delivered thee unto the will of

[1] Or, *a vaulted chamber* [2] Or, *allowance*

salem was in such a desperate state (for the expressions used to describe this see *vv.* 6, 7). The word translated 'an eminent place' here and in *vv.* 31, 39 (marg. 'a vaulted chamber') is an ambiguous one and may simply mean a mound, though some of the early versions give it a more definite meaning (LXX οἴκημα πορνικόν, πορνεῖον). The allusion is to what is more plainly expressed in other passages (e.g. Is. lvii. 7: Jer. ii. 20: iii. 2) with reference to the indecent and licentious orgies which accompanied some of the forms of idolatrous worship that were openly and unblushingly practised in the streets of the Holy City.

26–29. In these verses some of the various forms of imported worship are mentioned. The prophet begins with the Egyptians whose cults are also mentioned later on (xx. 7, 8: xxiii. 19–21), though it is not clear what forms were imported from Egypt. The words 'great of flesh,' applied to the Egyptians, are a euphemistic expression intended to illustrate the gross and sensual character of the worship. 'To provoke me to anger' does not imply that this was the object of those who did such things, but only that it was the natural consequence of their acts. The punishment for all this has come in the famine in the besieged city, during which the allowance of food (marg. better than text of R.V.) was cut down, and the Philistines (mentioned again, *v.* 57) are represented as taking advantage of the situation, for even their daughters had felt shame for their neighbours' misconduct. Such an invasion of the Philistines is described as taking place in the reign of king Ahaz (2 Chr. xxviii. 18).

Their misconduct also extended to the Assyrians, and an adoption of their worship which is described

them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines,
28 which are ashamed of thy lewd way. Thou hast played
the harlot also with the Assyrians, because thou wast
unsatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them,
29 and yet thou wast not satisfied. Thou hast moreover
multiplied thy whoredom [1]in the land of Canaan, unto
30 Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith. How
weak is thine heart, saith the Lord GOD, seeing thou doest
all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman;
31 in that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of
every way, and makest thy lofty place in every street; and
hast not been as an harlot, [2]in that thou scornest hire.
32 A wife that committeth adultery! that taketh strangers
33 instead of her husband! They give gifts to all harlots:
but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and bribest
them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy
34 whoredoms. And the contrary is in thee from *other*
women in thy whoredoms, in that none followeth thee to
commit whoredom: and whereas thou givest hire, and no
hire is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.

[1] Or, *unto the land of traffic*

[2] Or, *that scoffeth at* her *hire*

later (xxiii. 5–21). It was in the reign of Ahaz that tribute was paid to Tiglath-pileser and an altar was built in Jerusalem like one in Damascus, of which place Tiglath-pileser was in possession at the time. It is also well known, that just as there was an Egyptian party in Jerusalem, so also during its later times there was an Assyrian or Babylonian party (see Introd. pp. xxxviii ff.).

29. In this verse there is some confusion. An attempt is made to set it right by translating 'Canaan' as 'traffic' but this does not seem satisfactory (cp. xvii. 4 where a similar question arises, as also in Zeph. i. 11: Zech. xiv. 21: Pr. xxxi. 24; the R.V. is inconsistent). It is best here with the Septuagint to leave out the words 'in the land of Canaan.' This makes the passage more in accord with xxiii. 14–16; and these two chapters have much in common. Chaldean worship was practically the same as the Assyrian.

30–34. The language grows stronger still as Jerusalem in her pride and corruption is described as 'an imperious whorish woman' (cp. Is. xlvii. 7, 10); while her affection for her husband (God) is described as but little ('weak is thine heart'). The Septuagint omits 'imperious' and its translation points to some such emendation of the text as

35 Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD:
36 Thus saith the Lord GOD, Because thy [1]filthiness was
poured out, and thy nakedness discovered through thy
whoredoms with thy lovers; and because of all the idols
of thy abominations, and for the blood of thy children,
37 which thou didst give unto them; therefore behold, I will
gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure,
and all them that thou hast loved, with all them that thou
hast hated; I will even gather them against thee on every
side, and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they
38 may see all thy nakedness. And I will judge thee, as
women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged;
and I will bring upon thee the blood of fury and jealousy.
39 I will also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw

[1] Heb. *brass*.

Cornill has suggested 'What have I to do with thy covenant?' *V.* 31 *a* repeats *v.* 24, whilst the rest of the passage is intended to intensify the guilt of the city.

35–43. In these verses is described the punishment that is to come upon Jerusalem. It will come from those with whom she has sought a guilty union, and will also be a judicial punishment by which the Divine sentence will be executed. In *v.* 36 the forms of guilt are recapitulated. The meaning 'filthiness' given to the word which in Hebrew means 'bronze' or 'copper' (R.V. *marg.* 'brass') is very uncertain, but the reading is as old as the Septuagint which translates literally. It is scarcely possible to translate the word as if it meant 'money' here, but this is what is implied by the Greek rendering. Similar language to that in *v.* 37 *a* is used to describe the assembling of the spoilers of Israel by Hosea (viii. 10). The 'hated' ones refers back to the daughters of the Philistines of *v.* 27, to whom the Israelites were always opposed. The whole of this paragraph should be compared with xxiii. 22–35 (cp. also Hos. ii. 10), and similar language is used of the Babylon of the Apocalypse (Rev. xvii.). The fulfilment of this prophecy is described in similar language (Lam. i. 8, 9).

38. For the first part of this verse cp. xxiii. 45 where the judgement is assigned to righteous men. The punishment enjoined for such transgressions was death (Lev. xx. 10: Deut. xxii. 22; and for shedding of blood Gen. ix. 6: Num. xxxv. 33). The last words mean, that the end of Jerusalem was to be the result of the Divine fury and jealousy (cp. *v.* 42).

39. For the eminent and lofty places see *vv.* 24, 25, and for the 'fair jewels' see note on *v.* 17, and compare the description of Jeru-

down thine eminent place, and break down thy lofty places; and they shall strip thee of thy clothes, and take thy fair jewels: and they shall leave thee naked and bare.
40 They shall also bring up an assembly against thee, and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through
41 with their swords. And they shall burn thine houses with fire, and execute judgements upon thee in the sight of many women; and I will cause thee to cease from playing
42 the harlot, and thou shalt also give no hire any more. So will I [1]satisfy my fury [2]upon thee, and my jealousy shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more
43 angry. Because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but hast fretted me in all these things; therefore

[1] Heb. *bring to rest.* [2] Or, *toward*

salem in 1 Macc. ii. 9, 11 ('her vessels of glory are carried away... her adorning is all taken away'). Her last state is to be as her first (*v.* 7).

40–43. The assembly of the nations and what it will do is described again later (xxiii. 4, 6, 47). The sentence of death involved stoning with stones and the burning of the criminal's property (Josh. vii. 24, 25: cp. also Lev. xx. 2: Deut. xiii. 10: xvii. 5). If we are to look for a literal fulfilment of this sentence, in the case of Jerusalem, we shall find it in the use of some such 'instruments for casting...stones' as are mentioned in 1 Macc. vi. 51. The burning of Jerusalem is described in 2 K. xxv. 9: 2 Chr. xxxvi. 19: Jer. xxxix. 8: lii. 13. The punishment is to take place 'in the sight of many women' (*v.* 41), i.e. of many peoples. The intention of the insertion of these words is more clearly expressed in the corresponding passage in xxiii. 48 'that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness.' The phrase 'I will satisfy my fury,' which occurs elsewhere in this book (v. 13: xxi. 17: xxiv. 13), is one of doubtful meaning: it may simply mean 'I will bring my fury to rest,' i.e. to an end (R.V. *marg.*). The R.V. in the words 'hast fretted me' (*v.* 43) follows the generally accepted emendation of the Hebrew text, which as it stands should be translated 'wast angry with Me'; but the emended text gives the better sense. The meaning of the last words of this verse is also very obscure. The Hebrew text has the first person, whilst in the Hebrew margin the second person is read. Two renderings of this latter reading are given in R.V., though the Hebrew verb can scarcely be translated as a future, as it is in the text of R.V., and the whole clause scarcely admits of being translated as a question. The Septuagint has another reading instead of the negative particle and translates 'and

behold, I also will bring thy way upon thine head, saith the Lord GOD: and [1]thou shalt not commit *this* lewdness above all thine abominations.

44 Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use *this* proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her
45 daughter. Thou art thy mother's daughter, that loatheth her husband and her children; and thou art the sister of thy sisters, which loathed their husbands and their children: your mother was an Hittite, and your father an
46 Amorite. And thine elder sister is Samaria, that dwelleth at thy left hand, she and her daughters: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is Sodom and her
47 daughters. Yet hast thou not walked in their ways, nor

[1] Or, *hast thou not committed &c.?*

thus thou didst commit iniquity in addition to all thy acts of lawlessness.' Toy omits the words altogether.

44–63. The section of the prophecy which we have now to deal with is full of difficulties of interpretation. That this was felt is shewn by the uncertain state of the Hebrew text in which there are many doubtful readings. But the main purpose of it is plain:—to point out the degradation of morals and religion into which Jerusalem had fallen, so low indeed that Samaria and Sodom could be considered better than she was. Yet for all this God, who is God of Jew and Gentile alike (cp. Rom. iii. 29), is waiting to be gracious to all three and to establish a new and everlasting covenant.

44–47. This is the second time that Ezekiel quotes a proverb and he quotes another later on ('the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge' xviii. 2: cp. xii. 22 and the expression 'they that speak in proverbs' Num. xxi. 27). Starting with this proverb he recurs to the origin of Jerusalem (*v.* 3). The husband of Jerusalem is Jehovah (cp. Is. liv. 5 'thy Maker is thine husband'), and the prophet implies that He stood originally in the same relation to other nations. The loathing of Him is the forsaking of His worship: the loathing of the children is the offering them in sacrifice. The sisters of Jerusalem are said to be Samaria and Sodom, both destroyed for their iniquities. Samaria might well be said to have forsaken Jehovah's worship and to have offered her children in sacrifice, but a difficulty arises, as to how this could be said of Sodom. The most possible interpretation is that, in the case of that city, reference is made to the licentious condition of social life in that place. This relationship be-

done after their abominations; but, as *if that were* a very little *thing*, thou wast more corrupt than they in all thy
48 ways. As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done,
49 thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, fulness of bread, and prosperous ease was in her and in her daughters; neither did she
50 strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me:
51 therefore I took them away [1]as I saw *good*. Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast

[1] Or, *when I saw* it

tween Samaria and Jerusalem is again expressed in xxiii. 4, 33. Both Samaria and Sodom were Canaanite (*v.* 3) and in this way the relationship asserted here is to be accounted for; but in the case of Samaria there may possibly be an allusion to the kingdom of Israel, which had its capital there. Samaria was on the left hand, i.e. the north (Gen. xiv. 15) of Jerusalem, whilst Sodom was on the right hand, i.e. the south (cp. 1 Sam. xxiii. 19, 24: Ps. lxxxix. 13). The points of the compass were indicated in this way by facing the rising sun. The daughters of Samaria and Sodom are the towns and villages dependent upon them (cp. e.g. Josh. xvi. 45). Jerusalem is represented as having done worse than either of them; we are reminded of our Lord's saying, repeated more than once, 'it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement' (Matt. x. 15: xi. 24) in His denunciation of those places that would not accept Him (cp. also 2 K. xxi. 9: 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9).

48–50. The asseveration 'As I live' (*v.* 48) constantly occurs in this form in this book (v. 11: xiv. 16, 18, 20: xvii. 16, 19: xviii. 3: xx. 3, 33), and much more frequently than elsewhere. Of the iniquity attributed to Sodom here, pride is again mentioned in Ecclus. xvi. 8 ('He spared not those with whom Lot sojourned, Whom he abhorred for their pride'), while the prosperity of the Cities of the Plain is implied in Gen. xiii. 10. Their abominations (*v.* 50) are mentioned in Gen. xiii. 13, and elsewhere (cp. 2 Pet. ii. 7 for 'the lascivious life of the wicked' which sorely distressed 'righteous Lot': Jude 7). The destruction ('taking away' *v.* 50) of Sodom is described in Gen. xix. The last words of *v.* 50 are better translated as in R.V. *marg.* 'when I saw it' and perhaps may refer to Gen. xviii. 21 ('I will go down now, and see whether they have done...').

51, 52. The prophet now turns to Samaria and declares that Samaria and Sodom were not so bad as Jerusalem; this is the meaning of the phrase 'hast justified thy sisters' (cp. Jer. iii. 11). 'Bear thine own

multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters by all thine abominations which thou
52 hast done. Thou also, bear thine own shame, in that thou hast given judgement for thy [1]sisters; through thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they, they are more righteous than thou: yea, be thou also confounded, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters.
53 And I will [2]turn again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, and the captivity of thy captives in the
54 midst of them: that thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be ashamed because of all that thou hast done,
55 in that thou art a comfort unto them. And thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, and thou and thy daughters shall return to
56 your former estate. For thy sister Sodom was not
57 mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride; before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the time of the reproach of the daughters of Syria, and of all that are

[1] Or, *sister* [2] Or, *return to*

shame' is another of the phrases which Ezekiel delights to use (*v.* 54: xxxii. 24, 25, 30: xxxiv. 27: xxxvi. 6, 7: xxxix. 26: xliv. 13).

53–55. Sodom and Samaria are both promised restoration in these verses. The material restoration of Sodom cannot be thought of: it can only mean the restoration upon repentance to Divine favour of cities such as Sodom was. This was the only way in which the prophet in his day could express such an idea, unless he was imagining the site of Sodom to be inhabited once again by a prosperous people. It is difficult to understand what is meant by Jerusalem being a comfort to Sodom and Samaria. The usual interpretation given to it is that she was a comfort to them by being worse than they were, so that they felt their own guilt less (A. B. Davidson), but this does not seem very satisfactory.

56–58. Sodom was naturally ignored, as having been utterly destroyed, whilst her destruction ought to have been taken as a warning. The wickedness that 'was discovered' was in the reign of Ahaz when false worship was rampant. This is closely connected in history (2 K. xvi. 4–6; cp. Is. vii. 1, 2) with the combined attack of Syria under Rezin, and Pekah of Israel upon Jerusalem ('the reproach of the daughters of Syria' *v.* 57). The Syrians also attacked Judah in Jehoiakim's reign (2 K. xxiv. 2: Jer.

round about her, the daughters of the Philistines, which
58 do despite unto thee round about. Thou hast borne thy
59 lewdness and thine abominations, saith the LORD. For
thus saith the Lord GOD: I will even deal with thee as
thou hast done, which hast despised the oath in breaking
60 the covenant. Nevertheless I will remember my covenant
with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish
61 unto thee an everlasting covenant. Then shalt thou
remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt
receive thy sisters, thine elder *sisters* and thy younger:
and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by
62 thy covenant. And I will establish my covenant with
63 thee; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: that
thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never
open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame; when I
have forgiven thee all that thou hast done, saith the Lord
GOD.

xxxv. 11). There is, therefore, no need as has been suggested to substitute Edom for Syria. It was in the reign of Ahaz, as we have seen already (*v.* 27), that the Philistines invaded Judah. Jerusalem had to be punished for its wickedness (cp. xxiii. 35, 49).

59–63. The time of punishment is to bring a time of repentance, and then will follow the renewal of the covenant. Jerusalem had despised the oath which Jehovah had taken. It had also broken the covenant with Jehovah by the introduction of false and idolatrous cults. But He could remember it; there is the same promise in Lev. xxvi. 42 to the rebellious people; and the covenant to be remembered was not only that at Sinai, but also that with the patriarchs (Ex. ii. 24: vi. 5: cp. Ps. cvi. 45). The renewed covenant would be an everlasting covenant, as the old one would have been had it not been broken by the people. The idea of a new everlasting covenant is common to Isaiah (lv. 3); and Jeremiah (xxxii. 40: l. 5) with Ezekiel. Under it Jerusalem will receive not only Sodom and Samaria but other sisters (i.e. greater and smaller nations) as well to be treated as daughters. It is to be 'not by her covenant' that they are received but by the new Divine covenant, which is eventually to include the whole world (Rom. xi. 32).

After all this sad story of uncleanness and abominations, with the renewal of the covenant we once again catch up the old refrain (vi. 7) 'thou shalt know that I am the Lord.'

It is to be noticed that the prophet, in order to shew the intensity of the degradation into which Jerusalem has fallen, asserts that her restoration cannot take place till after that of Sodom and Samaria.

xxvi. *A riddle and its interpretation. Two eagles, the cedar, and the vine,* i.e. *Babylon, Egypt, and the king and princes of Jerusalem, with their destruction. The restoration of Jerusalem and the Davidic house will come in the future with a universal acceptance of its authority.* xvii. 1–24.

XVII. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a
3 parable unto the house of Israel; and say, Thus saith the
Lord GOD: A great eagle with great wings and long
pinions, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came
4 unto Lebanon, and took the top of the cedar: he cropped
off the topmost of the young twigs thereof, and carried it
into [1]a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants.
5 He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in

[1] Or, *the land of Canaan*

XVII. 1–10. The 'riddle' of this passage, also called 'a parable,' consists in the allegory of which the interpretation has to be found. The eagle is the king of Babylon (so Jer. xlviii. 40: xlix. 22: cp., for this use of the eagle as the emblem of an invading force, Deut. xxviii. 49 'The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far...as the eagle flieth,' and 2 Esd. xi. 1). The first eagle is more powerful than the second (*v.* 7): it has divers colours because many various nations were ruled over by Nebuchadrezzar. The cedar of Lebanon represents here the Jewish people; later when the land was under Babylonian rule the Assyrian is 'a cedar in Lebanon' (xxxi. 3). 'The topmost of the young twigs thereof' must be the king of Judah. Jehoiachin and Zedekiah the last two kings of Judah were both carried off to Babylon. In *v.* 4 there is an ambiguity of meaning which has occurred already (see note on xvi. 29) between 'land of traffic' and 'land of Canaan.' Here the land of traffic must be Babylonia.

It is clear from the Apocalypse (Rev. xviii. 10–20) that Babylon was looked upon as *the* typical 'city of merchants' in old time.

It is quite possible that the planting of 'the seed of the land' may indicate the setting up of Mattaniah (i.e. Zedekiah) as a vassal king in Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar, but it is more likely that the expression refers not only to him but also to the princes and mighty men of Judah who were carried off to Babylon in Jehoiachin's reign (2 K. xxiv. 12, 14–16) and placed by the streams and canals of Babylon, where the willow was one of the most

[1]a fruitful soil; he placed it beside [2]many waters; he set
6 it as a willow tree. And it grew, and became a spreading
vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him,
and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine,
7 and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs. There
was also another great eagle with great wings and many
feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend its roots toward
him, and shot forth its branches toward him, from the beds
8 of its plantation, that he might water it. It was planted
in a good [3]soil by [2]many waters, that it might bring forth
branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a
9 goodly vine. Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Shall
it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut
off the fruit thereof, that it may wither; that all its fresh
springing leaves may wither; even without great power or
10 much [4]people to pluck it up by the roots thereof? Yea,

[1] Heb. *a field of seed.* [2] Or, *great* [3] Heb. *field.*
[4] Or, *people, plucking &c.*

noticeable trees (Ps. cxxxvii. 2 'Upon the willows in the midst thereof We hanged up our harps'). A corresponding use of the willow in a simile is to be found in Is. xliv. 4. The tree actually meant is the *Populus euphratica*, a kind of poplar like a willow (*Encycl. Bib.* 5301). The word used here is, however, different from that used in other places in the Bible. There seems to be no doubt about its meaning though the Septuagint translators have mistaken the word. In *v.* 6 the vine of low stature is the Jewish people reduced to a low estate that had to look to the king of Babylon and be under his authority, but yet under it developed in some degree ('it...shot forth sprigs'). The other eagle is the Egyptian monarchy towards which the Jews often looked for assistance (for the language used cp. xxxi. 4; Pharaoh Hophra is perhaps specially pointed at here), but it is not described as being as strong as the first eagle. Egypt also had its great waters, i.e. the Nile; so that the vine is represented as endeavouring to depend upon both empires at once, but it is not to prosper. The Egyptian was to join in the destruction of the vine ('shall he not pull up the roots thereof': for the Egyptian share in the destruction of the kingdom of Judah beginning with the battle at Megiddo and the death of Josiah see 2 K. xxiii. 29, 33–35: 2 Chr. xxxv. 20–xxxvi. 4). The ruin brought by the east wind may very well mean the invasion from Babylon which pushed back the power of Egypt to the brook of Egypt (2 K. xxiv. 7: Jer. xlvi. 2) as well as destroyed entirely the

behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the beds where it grew.

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
12 Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, and took the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and brought them to him to Babylon;
13 and he took of the seed royal, and made a covenant with him; he also brought him under an oath, and took away
14 the mighty of the land: that the kingdom might be [1]base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his
15 covenant it might stand. But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? shall he break the cove-
16 nant, and yet escape? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall

[1] Heb. *low.*

kingdom of Judah. Yet after this the remnant of Judah still looked towards Egypt and some of them with Jeremiah, though in his case against his will, actually migrated into that country (Jer. xliii.).

11–21. In these verses we have the solution of the riddle, which has been already dealt with. 'The rebellious house' is an expression which looks back to the prophet's original commission (ii. 5, 'they are a rebellious house': cp. ii. 6, 8: iii. 26: xxiv. 3: xliv. 6). In *v.* 13, where Zedekiah is referred to, the statement of the Chronicler (2 Chr. xxxvi. 13) that Nebuchadrezzar 'had made him swear by God' is confirmed. The only mention that we have of the Egyptians in Zedekiah's reign is that in Jer. xxxv. 5 where the Pharaoh comes out of Egypt during the siege of Jerusalem. That the king should send his people to Egypt for horses was forbidden by the Deuteronomic legislation (Deut. xvii. 16), though in Solomon's time such intercourse with Egypt seems to have been of common occurrence (1 K. x. 28: 2 Chr. i. 16: ix. 28); Isaiah denounces such intercourse and traffic (xxxi. 1). In this passage

17 die. Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and
great company make for him in the war, when they cast
18 up mounts and build forts, to cut off many persons. For
he hath despised the oath by breaking the covenant; and
behold, he had given his hand, and yet hath done all
19 these things; he shall not escape. Therefore thus saith
the Lord GOD: As I live, surely mine oath that he hath
despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, I will
20 even bring it upon his own head. And I will spread my
net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I
will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there
21 for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me. And
all his fugitives in all his bands shall fall by the sword,
and they that remain shall be scattered toward every
wind: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken
it.

22 Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will also take of the
lofty top of the cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from
the topmost of his young twigs a tender one, and I will

we seem also to have a link of connection with the prophecy in the last chapter (xvi. 59 'which hast despised the oath in breaking the covenant'). As to the death of Zedekiah we have no record in the Bible, which takes him to Babylon and leaves him there. The Pharaoh of *v.* 17 is Pharaoh Hophra (Jer. xliv. 30): though his army caused a temporary cessation of the siege by the Babylonians yet it was only temporary (Jer. xxxvii. 5–8). Zedekiah 'had given his hand,' i.e. he had submitted to Nebuchadrezzar (cp. 1 Chr. xxix. 24). The first half of *v.* 20 is a repetition of xii. 13 and the prophecy of the scattering of the remnant occurs also in v. 10 and xii. 14. The paragraph ends with a new expression 'I the Lord have spoken it' (so xxi. 17, 32: xxvi. 5, 14: xxviii. 10: xxx. 12: xxxiv. 24: xxxix. 5: see also *v.* 24).

22–24. The rest of this chapter deals with the restoration of Jerusalem and the house of David, of which the line is still to be kept up ('a tender one' from the topmost of the young twigs of the cedar). The mountain in the prophet's mind was no doubt Mount Zion (cp. Ps. ii. 6). But the new cedar tree which is to grow from the tender twig is to embrace all nations ('all fowl of every wing') and all kingdoms ('all the trees'); in this way the universality of the new covenant is expressed (for the language used cp. xxxi. 6: Dan. iv. 12 and our Lord's

23 plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the
mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it
shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly
cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing;
in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.
24 And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD
have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low
tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the
dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have
done it.

xxvii. *A discussion of the proverb 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' Sin and the personal responsibility of man for it.* xviii. 1–32.

XVIII. 1 The word of the LORD came unto me
2 again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb
[1]concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have
eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on
3 edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have

[1] Or, *in*

parable of the grain of mustard seed Matt. xiii. 31, 32: Mk iv. 30–32: Lk. xiii. 18, 19). The green tree and the dry tree both occur again in xx. 47 and are both together used figuratively by our Lord (Lk. xxiii. 31): 'if they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?' The expression at the end of *v.* 24 'I the Lord have spoken and have done it' is more emphatic than that at the end of *v.* 21 and occurs frequently in this book (cp. xxii. 14: xxiv. 14: xxxvi. 36: xxxvii. 14).

XVIII. 1–3. The use of a proverb is a familiar one with Ezekiel, just as much as the parable and the riddle (cp. xii. 22: xvi. 44). That quoted here seems to have been constantly used and occurs in Jeremiah (xxxi. 29, 30) who lays down in the language of the proverb the main thesis of this chapter: 'Every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.' On the other hand in the Lamentations (v. 7) the opposite side of the truth is maintained: 'Our fathers have sinned, and are not; And we have borne their iniquities.' For the solemn asseveration of *v.* 3 see xvi. 48.

4 *occasion* any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold,
all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the
soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.
5 But if a man be just, and do [1]that which is lawful and
6 right, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither
hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel,
neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath
7 come near to a woman in her separation; and hath
not wronged any, but hath restored to the debtor his
pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his
bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a

[1] Heb. *judgement and righteousness.*

4. *souls*] The word *nephesh* which is translated 'soul' here really expresses personality rather than what we generally mean by soul. A discussion on the meaning of the word in the Old Testament can be found in A. B. Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament* (p. 199). The main doctrine of this passage is summed up in the statement twice repeated (*vv.* 4, 24) 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die,' which lays down in the most absolute way a personal responsibility for sin. Ezekiel's view of sin and its punishment is to be found discussed in the Introd., p. xxxiv, and this passage should be compared with iii. 16–21.

5–9. The Hebrew expression corresponding with 'that which is lawful and right' (*vv.* 5, 19, 21, 27) is 'judgement and righteousness,' i.e. legal and moral goodness. Specimens of the contraries to these are given:

(*a*) eating upon the mountains (*vv.* 6, 11, 15: cp. xxii. 9: Is. lxv. 7). This was the joining in the sacrificial feasts which took place there. Many slightly alter the Hebrew text in this and the corresponding verses here and also in xxii. 9 to make it agree with xxxiii. 25 eating with the blood, a practice forbidden in Gen. ix. 4: Lev. iii. 17: but this is scarcely necessary and the present text is confirmed by the Septuagint.

(*b*) lifting up the eyes to the idols of the house of Israel (*vv.* 6, 12, 15: cp. xxxiii. 26); that is, in reverential worship.

(*c*) sins against the marriage tie and purity (*vv.* 6, 11, 15: cp. xxii. 10, 11: Lev. xviii. 19, 20).

(*d*) wronging any (*vv.* 7, 12 in greater detail, the poor and needy are the object of the oppression, 16: cp. Ex. xxii. 21 for the wronging of the stranger).

(*e*) lending for usury or taking increase (*vv.* 8, 13, 17: cp. xxii. 12: Ex. xxii. 25: Lev. xxv. 36: Deut. xxiii. 19 laws only applying to Hebrews: Ps. xv. 5). A distinction can scarcely be drawn between 'usury' and 'increase'; unless increase be excessive profit in trading.

Positive good deeds of the 'just' or righteous men are also mentioned:—

8 garment; he that hath not given forth upon usury,
neither hath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his
hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgement be-
9 tween man and man, hath walked in my statutes, and
hath kept my judgements, to deal truly; he is just, he
10 shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD. If he beget a son
that is a robber, a shedder of blood, and [1]that doeth any
11 one of these things, and that doeth not any of those
duties, but even hath eaten upon the mountains, and
12 defiled his neighbour's wife, hath wronged the poor and
needy, hath spoiled by violence, hath not restored the
pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes to the idols, hath
13 committed abomination, hath given forth upon usury, and
hath taken increase: shall he then live? he shall not
live: he hath done all these abominations: he shall

[1] Or, *that doeth to a brother any of these*

(*a*) the restoring of the pledge (*v.* 7, cp. *vv.* 12, 16 in an enlarged form no pledge being taken at all); this is enjoined in the law (Ex. xxii. 26 of a garment, Deut. xxiv. 12, 13: cp. Job xxii. 6: xxiv. 9: Pr. xxii. 27: Am. ii. 8).

(*b*) abstaining from robbery with violence (*vv.* 7, 12, 16, 18).

(*c*) giving bread to the hungry (*vv.* 7, 16: a virtue inculcated in Is. lviii. 7, 10: Matt. xxv. 35).

(*d*) clothing the naked, another corporal act of mercy (see references under *c*).

(*e*) keeping the hand from iniquity and executing true judgement or impartiality (cp. Deut. i. 16: Zech. viii. 16).

(*f*) being an observer of God's laws (*vv.* 9, 17).

These details are followed by the summing up of them all into the statement 'he is just' and the promise 'he shall surely live' (*vv.* 9, 17, 19, 21: cp. xx. 11) which are combined in the statement of Habakkuk (ii. 4) often quoted in the New Testament (Rom. i. 17: Gal. iii. 11: Heb. x. 38), 'the just shall live by his faith' (R.V. *marg.* 'in his faithfulness').

10–13. The case of a wicked son of such a father is now considered, and a catalogue of his transgressions, using the same expressions, is given. But to them is added 'a robber, a shedder of blood.' The insertion in R.V. *marg.* of 'to a brother' (*v.* 10) is due to a various reading in the Hebrew text. The words 'hath committed abomination' which do not occur previously (*v.* 6) may refer to the idolatrous abominations condemned earlier in the book (viii. 6, 17). The responsibility and the punishment for these will be the son's own: his blood will be upon him, i.e. upon his own head (cp. xxxiii. 4: Lev. xx. 9, 11).

14 surely [1]die; his blood shall be upon him. Now, lo, if he
beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins, which he hath
15 done, and [2]feareth, and doeth not such like, that hath not
eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes
to the idols of the house of Israel, hath not defiled his
16 neighbour's wife, neither hath wronged any, hath not
taken aught to pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence,
but hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath
17 covered the naked with a garment, that hath withdrawn
his hand from the poor, that hath not received usury nor
increase, hath executed my judgements, hath walked in
my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his
18 father, he shall surely live. As for his father, because he
cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence, and did
that which is not good among his people, behold, he shall
19 die [3]in his iniquity. Yet say ye, Wherefore doth not the
son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath
done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my

[1] Heb. *be put to death.* [2] Another reading is, *seeth*, or, *considereth.* [3] Or, *for*

14–17. Ezekiel follows the matter up to the consideration of the third generation, imagining the case of the wicked son having a good son of his own, who lives a righteous life warned by and afraid because of the iniquities of the father. The variation of reading in *v.* 14 does not materially alter the sense. To withdraw the hand from the poor is to keep from doing them any wrong. In this case no harm will come to the man because of his father's wickedness.

18. A return for a moment to the sentence upon the father for his wrong doing and acts of oppression. His sentence will come upon him, but in case the prophet should not warn him, the prophet's fate is also to be his according to an earlier prophecy (iii. 18) because he had not given the man warning.

19, 20. Apparently the proverbial expression which expressed a belief of the time had arisen from a false interpretation of the second commandment (Ex. xx. 5). The hearers are represented as objecting; the prophet therefore repeats his statement that the righteous son will not suffer in the long run for the iniquities of the wicked father. They had lost sight in the commandment of the words 'them that hate Me,' 'them that love Me and keep My commandments'; though this was not always so (see 2 K. xiv. 6 where Deut. xxiv. 16 is quoted: 'The fathers shall not be put to death for

20 statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked
21 shall be upon him. But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live,
22 he shall not die. None of his transgressions that he hath committed shall be remembered against him: in his
23 righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord GOD: and not rather that he should return from his way, and
24 live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that

the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin'). Jeremiah, too, had said that the proverbial expression which embodied the popular belief would be no more used (xxxi. 29, 30). Individual responsibility is here plainly asserted just as it is by St Paul (see Rom. ii.).

It may be said after all that a son does suffer sometimes for the sins of his father, and no doubt this is true in one sense. But the prophet, like St Paul, is dealing with the permanent and not with the temporary consequences of sin.

21–23. There is a place of repentance for the wicked if he do but accept it, as God would have him do. But this must be by a *volte face*. Not only must he give up vices but he must practice the opposite virtues (cp. *vv.* 27, 28: xxxiii. 19). *V.* 22 is practically repeated in xxxiii. 16; there is to be a blotting out of his transgressions, and this because God willeth not the death of the sinner. This idea occurs again in *v.* 32 and xxxiii. 11 where it is made the ground of an appeal to the people to repent. For the doctrine involved we may compare 2 Esd. viii. 59 ('the Most High willed not that men should come to nought'): Wisd. i. 13: 1 Tim. ii. 4, 6 (God 'willeth that all men should be saved'): Tit. ii. 11: 2 Pet. iii. 9.

24. The next two verses describe the fall of the righteous (cp. iii. 20: xxxiii. 12, 13). All his previous goodness will not count: he shall die in his sins: cp. 2 Pet. ii. 20 'if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again

he hath done shall be remembered: in his trespass that
he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in
25 them shall he die. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is
not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel: Is not my way
26 equal? are not your ways unequal? When the righteous
man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth
iniquity, [1]and dieth [2]therein; [3]in his iniquity that he hath
27 done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth
away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and
doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his
28 soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away
from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he
29 shall surely live, he shall not die. Yet saith the house of
Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of
Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways
30 unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel,
every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD.
Return ye, and turn yourselves from all your trans-
31 gressions; [4]so iniquity shall not be your [5]ruin. Cast

[1] Or, *he shall die* [2] Or, *because of it* [3] Or, *for* [4] Or, *so shall they not be a stumblingblock of iniquity unto you* [5] Heb. *stumblingblock.*

entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first.'

25–28. A complaint against the equity of God's judgement answered. The same complaint which occurs again in *v.* 29 is repeated and answered in much the same way later (xxxiii. 17, 20). It is man that is to blame, not God. *V.* 26 is a repetition of *v.* 24. The marginal renderings are to be preferred. *V.* 27 repeats *v.* 21 (cp. xxxiii. 19). 'He shall save his soul alive' means 'he shall rescue it so that it shall live.' In *v.* 28 'he considereth' implies that he realises the consequences of his sins.

29–32. The complaint is once more represented as being made. Punishment is threatened again but the chapter concludes with an appeal to the people to repent. The sentence passed (*v.* 30) is a repetition of one already announced (vii. 3, 8) and recurs again (xxxiii. 20: cp. xxxvi. 19). The appeal to return has been already made (xiv. 6), as it had been by Hosea (xiv. 1 'O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity'). Of the two renderings of the last clause of *v.* 30 that in the text is the best. The casting away of transgressions is to leave them behind, and refers most probably to the idolatrous worship (cp. xx. 7). The new heart and new spirit had

away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new
32 spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live.

xxviii. *A lamentation over the royal family of Judah.* xix. 1–14.

XIX. 1 Moreover, take thou up a lamentation for
2 the princes of Israel, and say, What was thy mother? A lioness: she couched among lions, in the midst of the
3 young lions she nourished her whelps. And she brought up one of her whelps; he became a young lion: and he

already been promised (xi. 19); and the appeal 'why will ye die?' is repeated later (xxxiii. 11). *V.* 32 repeats the interrogation of *v.* 23 in another form.

We may perhaps trace back to the teaching of this chapter a saying, sometimes attributed to our Lord, sometimes to one of the prophets: 'In whatsoever state I find you, in that will I judge you' (*ἐν οἷς ἂν ὑμᾶς καταλάβω, ἐν τούτοις καὶ κρινῶ*, Justin, *Dial. c. Tryph.* c. 47; *οἷον γὰρ εὕρω σε, τοιοῦτον καὶ κρινῶ*, Basil, *Ep.* i. 42; cp. Resch, 'Agrapha,' *Texte und Unters.* v. 4, p. 112).

The whole of this chapter deals with the same problem, the relation of individual responsibility to heredity, which is still being discussed and was discussed over and over again in the Greek drama, e.g. we may compare especially the Agamemnon of Aeschylus, in which the Chorus will not allow Clytemnestra to escape the responsibility for her wicked deed by throwing the blame upon the evil genius of the race (*Ag.* 1497–1507).

XIX. 1–9. The lamentation included in these verses is parabolic in form but the interpretation is clear. Other lamentations occur in xxvi. 17: xxvii. 2, 32 (for Tyre): xxviii. 12 (for Tyre's king): xxxii. 2 (for the Pharaoh): and also in Am. v. 1: Jer. vii. 29. The lion is connected with Judah from Jacob's blessing, where Judah is compared to both lion and lioness (Gen. xlix. 9), down to the Apocalypse (Rev. v. 5), where we read of 'the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah.' The young lion of *v.* 3 must be Jehoahaz whose mother (others take the 'mother' here as only meaning the 'nation') was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah (2 K. xxiii. 31). Pharaoh-necoh was the Egyptian king who captured him: 'he was taken in their pit' (cp. *v.* 8: Lam. iv. 20), referring to the capture of wild animals by digging pits and covering the mouths of them so that they

4 learned to catch the prey, he devoured men. The nations
also heard of him; he was taken in their pit: and they
5 brought him with hooks unto the land of Egypt. Now
when she saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost,
then she took another of her whelps, and made him a
6 young lion. And he went up and down among the lions,
he became a young lion: and he learned to catch the
7 prey, he devoured men. And he knew their [1]palaces, and
laid waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the
8 fulness thereof, because of the noise of his roaring. Then
the nations set against him on every side from the
provinces: and they spread their net over him; he was

[1] Or, *widows*

were trapped in them. Jehoahaz was carried off into Egypt (2 K. xxiii. 34: 2 Chr. xxxvi. 4: he is called Shallum in Jer. xxii. 11, 12 where his captivity is prophesied). Hooks or rings are represented on the monuments as put through the lips of prisoners (so *v.* 9: cp. R.V. *marg.* of 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11 'the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, which took Manasseh with hooks' and the prophecies of xxix. 4: xxxviii. 4: 2 K. xix. 28: Is. xxxvii. 29), and royal prisoners are known to have been put in cages in Babylon (see Toy on this passage). Upon the captivity of Jehoahaz, after a time of waiting in the hope that he might return to the throne (Jer. xxii. 10–12), Eliakim (or, Jehoiakim) was set up as king by the Egyptian king (2 K. xxiii. 34: 2 Chr. xxxvi. 4). The narrative here implies that the queen mother had also something to do with his accession: though Jehoiakim's mother was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah (2 K. xxiii. 36) and not Hamutal. It may be that the exact details of the parabolic language are not to be pressed or that Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin are left out and that Zedekiah, who was like Jehoahaz a son of Hamutal (2 K. xxiv. 18), is indicated here. In *v.* 7 the rendering of R.V. *marg.* is that of the Heb. text; that of R.V. is a conjectural emendation: it may refer to Zedekiah's succeeding his brother in the royal harem. Whichever king of Judah it is, he is represented as causing devastation in the land: so 2 K. xxiv. 4 says that 'he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood.' If Jehoiakim is the king intended then the nations who came against him (*v.* 8) would be the nations of the tributary provinces of the Babylonian empire, and might also include those mentioned in 2 K. xxiv. 2. He was taken as in a net (cp. xii. 13: xvii. 20). But the carrying away to Babylon was only effected in the case of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. Nebuchadrezzar is, however, represented in 2 Chronicles (xxxvi. 6) as intending to carry Jehoiakim

9 taken in their pit. And they put him in a cage with
hooks, and brought him to the king of Babylon; they
brought him into strong holds, that his voice should no
more be heard upon the mountains of Israel.

10 Thy mother was like a vine, [1]in thy blood, planted by
the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by
11 reason of many waters. And she had strong rods for the
sceptres of them that bare rule, and [2]their stature was
exalted among the [3]thick boughs, and [4]they were seen in
12 [2]their height with the multitude of [2]their branches. But
she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground,
and the east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods
were broken off and withered; the fire consumed them.
13 And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and
14 thirsty land. And fire is gone out of [5]the rods of her

[1] See ch. 16. 6. Or, *in thy likeness* [2] Heb. *his.* [3] Or, *clouds*
[4] Heb. *he was.* [5] Or, *a rod*

into captivity, though it is clear from 2 K. xxiv. 6 and Jer. xxii. 18, 19 that he died and was buried at or near Jerusalem. It is therefore most probable that Zedekiah is intended throughout this passage: though A. B. Davidson would have us think of Jehoiachin in these verses, whilst he holds that *vv.* 10–14 refer to Zedekiah. The whole chapter may possibly be misplaced and should come later, and be inserted in a different collection of prophecies from that dated 591 B.C.

10–14. The lioness of the former part of the lamentation, if by the lioness is intended the nation, becomes in this part the vine, a simile of constant occurrence in the Old Testament (see note on xv. 6). If 'in thy blood' (*v.* 10) be right we must compare it with xvi. 6 (see R.V. *marg.* here); a conjectural emendation reads 'in a vineyard' (see Toy): the rest of the verse should be compared for its language with Ps. i. 3, and the whole passage with Ps. lxxx. 8 *seqq.* The 'many waters' of Palestine were one of its glories (Deut. viii. 7). The same variation of meaning between 'thick boughs' (R.V.) and 'clouds' (R.V. *marg.*) is to be found in xxxi. 3, 10, 14, where the Hebrew word of ambiguous meaning is used of the cedar.

The effect of the east wind upon the trees of the land is also described in xvii. 10: Hos. xiii. 15. The dry and thirsty land which had to be irrigated by a system of canals is Babylonia. Deportations took place in the reigns

branches, it hath devoured her fruit, so that there is in her no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

D. A COLLECTION OF PROPHECIES DATED 590 B.C. CHAPTERS XX.—XXIII.

xxix. *Israel, in the past, in the present and in the future.* XX. 1–44.

Perhaps the best comment that can be made upon the spirit of this chapter as a whole is to be found in *The Christian Year* (18th Sunday after Trinity):—

In the waste howling wilderness
The Church is wandering still,
Because we would not onward press
When close to Sion's hill.

Back to the world we faithless turned,
And far along the wild,
With labour lost and sorrow earned,
Our steps have been beguiled.

* * * *

Fain would our lawless hearts escape,
And with the heathen be,
To worship every monstrous shape
In fancied darkness free.

Vain thought that shall not be at all!
Refuse we or obey,
Our ears have heard the Almighty's call,
We cannot be as they. KEBLE.

XX. 1 And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth *month*, the tenth *day* of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the LORD, and 2 sat before me. And the word of the LORD came unto me, 3 saying, Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel, and

of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. *V.* 14 describes the revolts of these two kings, the result of which was the deposition of the royal house altogether.

XX. 1–4. This section of Ezekiel is dated almost one year and one month later than the last (viii.–xix.) and nearly two years and a half earlier than the next section (xxiv., xxv.). It

say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Are ye come to
inquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be
4 inquired of by you. Wilt thou judge them, son of man,
wilt thou judge them? cause them to know the abomina-
5 tions of their fathers; and say unto them, Thus saith the
Lord GOD: In the day when I chose Israel, and lifted up
mine hand unto the seed of the house of Jacob, and made
myself known unto them in the land of Egypt, when I
lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am the LORD
6 your God; in that day I lifted up mine hand unto them,
to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt into a land
that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey,
7 which is the glory of all lands: and I said unto them, Cast
ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and
defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the

opens exactly as the last did with the elders of Israel (viii. 1 Judah: for the use of these two terms see note there) sitting before the prophet (as they do also in xiv. 1) to hear the Divine message. But the Almighty refuses with a solemn asseveration (cp. xvi. 48) to give any answer to their inquiries: this is also the case previously (xiv. 3 'should I be inquired of at all by them?'). The repetition of the question in *v.* 4 occurs again in xxii. 2 'wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody city?' The inhabitants of Jerusalem were to know all the abominations which they like their forefathers had committed.

5–26. In order to inform them the prophet goes back to the history of their making as a nation and what happened to them not only in Egypt but also in the wilderness. It was in Egypt that they entered upon a national existence and were chosen solemnly by God to be His people. He lifted up His hand (twice in this verse, cf. *vv.* 6, 15, 23, 28, 42: xlvii. 14) in solemn assertion of this fact, and at the same time revealed Himself to them as their God under the Name now popularly pronounced Jehovah (Ex. iii. 14: vi. 2). With the birth of the nation was to come national deliverance and their removal into a land which God had looked out for them (cp. Ex. iii. 8) as a rich and fertile one, which the patriotic Jew could look upon as 'the glory of all lands' (so *v.* 15: cp. Jer. iii. 19: Zech. vii. 14: Ps. xlviii. 2 'the joy of the whole earth': Lam. ii. 15). On this adoption of His people God gave them an injunction to reject all worship except of Him. 'The abominations of their eyes' is an expression explained by *v.* 24 'their eyes went after their fathers' idols,' which must be read in connection with what Joshua is represented as saying (Josh. xxiv. 2):—'Your fathers...served other gods.' The

8 LORD your God. But they rebelled against me, and would
not hearken unto me; they did not every man cast away
the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake
the idols of Egypt: then I said I would pour out my fury
upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the
9 midst of the land of Egypt. But I wrought for my name's
sake, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the
nations, among whom they were, in whose sight I made
myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of
10 the land of Egypt. So I caused them to go forth out of
the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.
11 And I gave them my statutes, and [1]shewed them my
judgements, which if a man do, he shall live [2]in them.
12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign
between me and them, that they might know that [3]I am

[1] Heb. *made them to know.* [2] Or, *by* [3] Or, *I the* LORD *do sanctify them*

idols of Egypt would be different from these: though we are not told of their worshipping them when in Egypt, yet the Israelites looked back to the idols of Egypt, when they made the golden calf in imitation of the Egyptian God Apis. It was this false worship in Egypt which had excited God's anger against His people. The purpose of God's wrath was the vindication of His Name and honour, which otherwise would have been degraded among the heathen (cp. *v.* 22: Ps. cvi. 8: Is. xlviii. 11) who had seen His power exercised among His people (*v.* 14). The deliverance from Egypt accomplished, the people were brought into the wilderness where they received their laws of various kinds, 'judgements' and 'statutes' as they are called here. The statement about them (*v.* 11), 'which if a man do, he shall live in (*marg.* by) them,' is identical with that in Lev. xviii. 5. It occurs again in *vv.* 13, 21, Neh. ix. 29 and is reproduced twice by St Paul (Rom. x. 5: Gal. iii. 12: cp. Luke x. 28 'this do, and thou shalt live'). Another cause of complaint was the profanation of the sabbath (*vv.* 12, 13, 16, 21, 24)—a breach of the fourth Commandment. That institution was intended to shew them the claim that Jehovah had upon their service. But in this respect as in others they were disobedient; we find one case of sabbath-breaking in the wilderness (Numb. xv. 32–36) severely punished by death by stoning: and the manna that was given on the other days was withheld on the sabbath, when 'there went out some of the people for to gather' (Ex. xvi. 27). This complaint about the breaking of the sabbath recurs (xxii. 8: xxiii. 38); and the profanation occurred again in post-exilic times (Neh. xiii. 15–22); the use of the

13 the LORD that sanctify them. But the house of Israel
rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in
my statutes, and they rejected my judgements, which if a
man do, he shall live [1]in them; and my sabbaths they
greatly profaned: then I said I would pour out my fury
14 upon them in the wilderness, to consume them. But I
wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be
profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight
15 I brought them out. Moreover also I lifted up my hand
unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them
into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk
16 and honey, which is the glory of all lands; because they
rejected my judgements, and walked not in my statutes,
and profaned my sabbaths: for their heart went after their
17 idols. Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying
them, neither did I make a full end of them in the wilder-
18 ness. And I said unto their children in the wilderness, Walk
ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their
19 judgements, nor defile yourselves with their idols: I am
the LORD your God; walk in my statutes, and keep my
20 judgements, and do them: and hallow my sabbaths; and
they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may
21 know that I am the LORD your God. But the children

[1] Or, *by*

plural may hint at the neglect of the sabbatical years as well as of the sabbath. Once again God's wrath was to be poured out upon them (cf. *vv.* 8, 21) for the vindication of His Name and glory (*v.* 14: cf. *vv.* 9, 22). This vindication took the form in earlier times of excluding from the promised land all those of full age who came out of Egypt, except two (Numb. xiv. 28–30: Ps. xcv. 11), because of their disobedience and idolatry. But still justice was tempered with mercy, the nation as a nation survived.

18–26. The next generation in the wilderness was in its turn exhorted to obedience and abstinence from idolatry, the idolatry of their forefathers (Josh. xxiv. 14). Jehovah claimed all their obedience and all their allegiance, as in the first Commandment, and with regard to the sabbath, in the fourth (*v.* 20 repeats *v.* 12). But generation after generation (all are included in 'the children' of *v.* 21) were rebellious and met with the same sentence of judgement, and the same display of mercy. There was, however, always

rebelled against me; they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgements to do them, which if a man do, he shall live [1]in them; they profaned my sabbaths: then I said I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.
22 Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be profaned in the sight of
23 the nations, in whose sight I brought them forth. Moreover I lifted up mine hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the nations, and disperse
24 them through the countries; because they had not executed my judgements, but had rejected my statutes, and had profaned my sabbaths, and their eyes were after
25 their fathers' idols. Moreover also I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgements [2]wherein they should
26 not live; and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they [3]caused to pass through *the fire* all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.

27 Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: In this moreover have your fathers blasphemed me, in that they

[1] Or, *by* [2] Or, *whereby* [3] Or, *set apart all* See Ex. 13. 12.

hanging over them the sentence of dispersion (that sentence is pronounced in Deut. xxviii. 64) for their disobedience and idolatry. They were also delivered over to and allowed to live under evil laws (cp. Ps. lxxxi. 12: Acts vii. 42), and their offerings to false gods were a cause of pollution to them, and brought punishment in their train (*v.* 26) that they might be brought back to the acknowledgment of the true God. For the infant sacrifices cp. xvi. 20, 21. There is nothing to shew that these sacrifices were at any time an inherent part of the Jewish religion: they were intrusions from without.

27–29. This corruption of the people and their superstition had never ceased. What they had done was in derogation of the honour of God (this is the meaning of the word 'blasphemed' *v.* 27). These false worships have already been mentioned (vi. 13). 'The provocation of their offering' is another way of expressing 'their offering that provoked me.' The exact point of *v.* 29 is lost. The R.V. makes it little

28 have committed a trespass against me. For when I had
brought them into the land, which I lifted up mine hand
to give unto them, then they [1]saw every high hill, and
every thick tree, and they offered there their sacrifices,
and there they presented the provocation of their offering,
there also they made their sweet savour, and they poured
29 out there their drink offerings. Then I said unto them,
What meaneth the high place [2]whereunto ye go? So the
30 name thereof is called [3]Bamah unto this day. Wherefore
say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Do
ye pollute yourselves after the manner of your fathers?
31 and go ye a whoring after their abominations? and when
ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through
the fire, do ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, unto
this day? and shall I be inquired of by you, O house of
Israel? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be
32 inquired of by you: and that which cometh into your
mind shall not be at all; in that ye say, We will be as the
nations, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and

[1] Or, *looked out for* [2] Or, *whereunto ye go, and the name whereof...day?*
[3] That is, *High place.*

else than an explanation of the name Bamah. R.V. *margin* implies a derision of the high place couched in a jingling form (the transliteration *mâh habbâmâh...habbâîm...bâmâh* will indicate the kind of form of syllables predominant in the verse). In the following verses the accusations against the people are turned into questions the last of which has occurred before (*v.* 3: cp. xiv. 3). The expression 'that which cometh into your mind' also has its counterpart in xx. 32, xxxviii. 10. One of the temptations of the people was the desire to be like their neighbours. This it was, we are told, which led them to ask for a king (1 Sam. viii. 5 'make us a king to judge us like all the nations'): and this was one of the causes of their idolatry. Their gods are simply called here, as elsewhere (e.g. Deut. iv. 28), 'wood and stone,' just as when Hezekiah destroyed the brazen serpent, which had become an object of idolatry, he called it Nehushtan, i.e. a piece of brass. Their punishment is to come. God with His wrath and terrors will plead with His people and purify them, and at the same time exercise His sovereign power. His scattered people are to be gathered together again (Jer. xxxi. 8); but once more it is to be into a wilderness—'the wilderness of the peoples' (*v.* 35), i.e. the wilderness on whose outskirts lived many different peoples. There

33 stone. As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty
hand, and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured
34 out, will I be king over you: and I will bring you out
from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries
wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with a
35 stretched out arm, and with fury poured out: and I will
bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there
36 will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with
your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will
37 I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause
you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the
38 bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from among
you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will
bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but
they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall
39 know that I am the LORD. As for you, O house of Israel,
thus saith the Lord GOD: Go ye, serve every one his idols,
[1]and hereafter also, if ye will not hearken unto me: but
my holy name shall ye no more profane with your gifts,
40 and with your idols. For in mine holy mountain, in the

[1] Or, *but hereafter surely ye shall hearken unto me, and &c.*

God will plead (cp. xvii. 20: xxxviii. 22) with His people, in the sense of sitting in judgement upon them, face to face with them as at Sinai (Deut. vi. 4). 'The wilderness of the land of Egypt' is the wilderness on the borders of that country. The passing under the rod was the rededication of the people to God, just as the tithe of animals passed under the rod, when they were claimed as God's (Lev. xxvii. 32): it has nothing to do here with the rod of chastisement but is the tally rod on which they were counted. And as they pass under the rod, the rebellious and the wicked will be rejected, as their forefathers were, and kept out of the land (cp. xiii. 9) when the rest are restored. The separation is a separation by a judicial decision (cp. Matt. xxv. 32 'He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats'). Those who are admitted to favour will enter once again into covenant relationship with God. The final result is expressed in the recurring formula:—'ye shall know that I am the Lord' (cp. vi. 7). The prophecy then breaks out into bitter sarcasm: the people might serve their idols (cp. Judg. x. 14 'go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen') if they chose, but they should no more do

mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them, and there will I require your offerings, and the [1]firstfruits of your [2]oblations, with
41 all your holy things. [3]As a sweet savour will I accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in the sight of the nations.
42 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I lifted
43 up mine hand to give unto your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye have com-
44 mitted. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

[1] Or, *chief* [2] Or, *tribute* [3] Or, *With*

so in Jerusalem: there the offerings must and shall be given to Jehovah alone: else His Name would be profaned (cp. xxxix. 7: xliii. 7). The holy mountain is Mount Zion, and by naming *all* the house of Israel the prophecy includes a restoration of the Ten Tribes as well as of the kingdom of Judah; all alike will bring their offerings for acceptance (cp. Mal. iii. 4) to the restored Temple. In this way God's Name will be hallowed, and recognition of Him hold sway among Jews and Gentiles alike (cp. xxxvi. 23: xxxviii. 16, 23: xxxix. 27: Is. xl. 5: Ecclus. xxxvi. 3, 4 'As Thou wast sanctified in us before them, So be Thou magnified in them before us'). When this happy time should come the Jews, as a nation, would look back with loathing upon their past history (so vi. 9: xxxvi. 31), and realise that they had merited much more punishment than they had received (cp. Ps. ciii. 10 'He hath not dealt with us after our sins, Nor rewarded us after our iniquities').

It was one of the great glories of the pious Jew to celebrate the past history of his people, and commemorate God's dealings with it (Ps. lxxviii., civ., cv.: Neh. ix.: cp. Acts vii.). In this chapter the lesson to be taught is self-humiliation.

XXX. *A short separate prophecy against the South.* XX. 45–49.

This prophecy according to the Hebrew notation forms the commencement of chapter xxi. It stands independent both of what precedes and of what follows.

45 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
46 Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop *thy word* toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of
47 the field in the South; and say to the forest of the South, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south
48 to the north shall be burnt thereby. And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be
49 quenched. Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Is he not a speaker of parables?

45–49. Though this prophecy is quite independent of any other, the opening of it is constructed on the same model as xxi. 2. The expression 'drop [thy word]' occurs first in Am. vii. 16 and Mic. ii. 6 and afterwards only here and in xxi. 2. It is always used of prophecy. 'The south,' as is indicated in part by the printing of the R.V., represents three Hebrew words, *dârôm*, almost entirely limited to Ezekiel, *têmân*, and the still more common word *Negeb*. All alike refer to the district to the south of Judah, and the first survives to the present day, as it is still called Daroma: it is to the south of Gaza. It is questionable how far there was anything like what we should call 'forest' in this district at any time: we may compare the use of the word in Scotland, and it may simply refer to the scrub and low-growing bushes that flourish in the desert, which are easily consumed by fire (cp. Jer. xxi. 14). The green tree and the dry tree are contrasted as in xvii. 24 (which see). The devouring flame is represented as spreading northwards (so xxi. 4) to devour the land of Canaan itself, having been kindled by Jehovah. The exclamation 'Ah Lord God!' has occurred already (iv. 14: ix. 8: xi. 13), always in a deprecatory sense. Ezekiel as a speaker of parables wins no acceptance from the people: they cannot grasp the meaning of them. The parable is explained in the next section.

xxxi. *Another short utterance explanatory of the parable of the preceding verses.* xxi. 1–7.

XXI. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and
drop *thy word* toward the sanctuaries, and prophesy
3 against the land of Israel; and say to the land of Israel,
Thus saith the LORD: Behold, I am against thee, and will
draw forth my sword out of its sheath, and will cut off
4 from thee the righteous and the wicked. Seeing then that
I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked,
therefore shall my sword go forth out of its sheath against
5 all flesh from the south to the north: and all flesh shall
know that I the LORD have drawn forth my sword out of
6 its sheath; it shall not return any more. Sigh therefore,
thou son of man; with the breaking of thy loins and with
7 bitterness shalt thou sigh before their eyes. And it shall
be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou?

XXI. 1–5. Although this is a prophetic utterance independent of the last (xx. 45–49), it is evidently intended from the mode of its introduction to recall and be explanatory of the former parabolic statement of the same fact. For *vv.* 1, 2 cp. xx. 45, 46. 'The sanctuaries' must be the holy sites in Jerusalem. 'The fire' and 'flaming flame' (xx. 47) are the sword of Nebuchadrezzar and his host, used by Jehovah as His own instrument for the devastation of the land of Israel, and so He calls it 'My sword' (cp. Deut. xxxii. 41). All alike, good and bad, were to be cut off, as had been indicated in the parable by the green and dry tree (xx. 47); and the work was to begin from the south and go northward (so xx. 47)—this perhaps implies that Ezekiel expected Nebuchadrezzar to attack Egypt first and so to approach Jerusalem from the south—and all flesh were to know that it was Jehovah's work (so xx. 48). The statement 'it shall not return (i.e. to its sheath) any more' means 'it shall not return until it has accomplished its work.'

6, 7. As this announcement is made the prophet is bidden to lament. The 'breaking' of the loins is a curious expression, but intended to indicate violent bodily convulsions due to excessive grief. The cause of this excessive grief is explained to be the news of the certainty of the destruction that is coming (cp. vii. 5, 6), and the effect upon the people—the melting of hearts, a phrase occurring most often in Joshua (ii. 11: v. 1: vii. 5) but also in Ps. xxii. 14: Is. xiii. 7. The

that thou shalt say, Because of the tidings, for it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall [1]faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.

xxxii. *Another prophecy of invasion, cast in a quasi-poetic form: 'The song of the sword of the Lord'* (A. B. Davidson). xxi. 8–17.

8 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
9 Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD: Say,
10 A sword, a sword, it is sharpened, and also furbished: it is sharpened that it may make a slaughter; it is furbished that it may be as lightning: shall we then make mirth?

[1] Or, *be dim*

other effects, the feeble hands (cp. Is. xiii. 7: Jer. vi. 24) and weak knees, have occurred already together (vii. 17: cp. Is. xxxv. 3 'Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees' quoted in Heb. xii. 12). The last clause of *v.* 7 occurs again in xxxix. 8.

8–17. The style of this passage with its emphatic repetitions may well be compared with vii. 5 ff. 'An end is come, the end is come,' etc. The flashing of the sword is compared to lightning as in Deut. xxxii. 41 'If I whet the lightning of my sword' (cp. *vv.* 15, 28). Such a time is not one for taking pleasure (cp. 1 Cor. vii. 29–31). The last words of *v.* 10 are difficult, because, if they are translated as in the text, the Hebrew word for 'rod' which is always masculine elsewhere must be taken here and in *v.* 13 as feminine, whereas the word for 'sword' is feminine, and this explains the translations given in the margin of *vv.* 10, 13. Even then it is not clear what the expression 'the rod of My son' means. If we take the R.V. text it must mean the rod with which My son, i.e. My people, is chastised; if the margin, the rod with which My son has armed himself against his enemies. In either case the 'tree' is mentioned here, as being wood in contrast with the glittering spear of steel. The wooden rods of chastisement are despised by the chastising sword. Or, the wooden rods may be taken for the emblems of authority of weaker powers as compared with the sword of the king of Babylon. The Septuagint had a different Hebrew text before them, and many attempts have been made to amend the Hebrew, though there is little satisfaction to be gathered from them.

11 [1]the rod of my son, it contemneth every tree. And it is
given to be furbished, that it may be handled: the sword,
it is sharpened, yea, it is furbished, to give it into the hand
12 of the slayer. Cry and howl, son of man: for it is upon
my people, it is upon all the princes of Israel: [2]they are
delivered over to the sword with my people: smite
13 therefore upon thy thigh. For there is a trial; and [3]what
if even the rod that contemneth shall be no more? saith
14 the Lord GOD. Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy, and
smite thine hands together; and let the sword be doubled
the third time, the sword of the deadly wounded: it is the
sword of the great one that is deadly wounded, which

[1] Or, *it contemneth the rod of my son*, as *every tree* [2] Or, *terrors by reason of the sword are upon my people* [3] Or, *what if* the sword *contemn even the rod? it shall be no more, &c.*

The words translated 'shall we then make mirth?' have been also rendered: 'ha! let us make mirth' (Delitzsch) or 'woe o prince' (Smend) or 'against the prince' (Gesenius). Whichever meaning we give to the following words the idea implied, so far as we can arrive at any sense, is that the chastisement inflicted exceeds everything that has gone before. But the words are hopeless in their present state. A. B. Davidson gives a summary of the guesses that have been made at its meaning.

It has been held by many that these obscure passages (*vv.* 10, 13) look back to the passage about the sceptre departing from Judah in Jacob's blessings of his twelve sons (Gen. xlix. 10). This is mainly due to the obvious allusion to that passage later in this chapter (*v.* 27); there can scarcely, however, be any connection with it here.

11. The sword is furbished in order that it may be grasped by the hand to some purpose and slaughter may be effected by it. The thought of all this is to bring sorrow to the prophet for his people (just as in *v.* 6): the rendering of R.V. is better than R.V. *marg.* in *v.* 12. The smiting upon the thigh is a sign of grief (cp. Jer. xxxi. 19). A more reasonable rendering in *v.* 13 is 'the trial has been made,' i.e. the people have been put to the test and have failed, and the supposition is brought forward, 'what if the power of the people and of the princes (symbolised by the rod), or even that of Babylon, come to an end?' this at any rate is the ultimate meaning of both R.V. text and *margin*. The Hebrew text here is as obscure as in *v.* 10.

14–17. The smiting together of the prophet's hands is a sign of wrath (cp. xxii. 13: Numb. xxiv. 10). The reading 'let the sword be doubled' is considered very questionable—it may perhaps mean 'be given a double edge'—and an emendation has been suggested 'let the sword bereave.' In this verse (14) there is also an

15 [1]entereth into their chambers. I have set the [2]point of
the sword against all their gates, that their heart may
melt, and their stumblings be multiplied: ah! it is made
16 as lightning, it is pointed for slaughter. [3]Gather thee
together, go to the right; set thyself in array, go to the
17 left; [4]whithersoever thy face is set. I will also smite mine
hands together, and I will [5]satisfy my fury: I the LORD
have spoken it.

xxxiii. *A further prophecy of the sword, more clearly defined as that of the sword of the king of Babylon; with the sequel of the deposition of the king of Judah for an indefinite period.* xxi. 18–27.

18 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,
19 Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the
sword of the king of Babylon may come; they twain shall

[1] Or, *compasseth them about* [2] Or, *consternation* [3] Heb. *Make thyself one.* [4] Or, *whither is thy face set?* [5] Heb. *bring to rest.*

allusion to the three invasions of Nebuchadrezzar in the reigns of (*a*) Jehoiakim, (*b*) Jehoiachin, (*c*) Zedekiah (2 K. xxiv. 1, 10: xxv. 1). The rest of the verse is full of difficulty which seems well-nigh insoluble. Who is the great one that is deadly wounded? Nothing is said of Zedekiah being wounded during his flight from the city. All that is said is that his eyes were put out and he was carried to Babylon (2 K. xxv. 7); we are not told how long he lived there. It may be that the wound is dealt to the king's power. The R.V. *marg.* is the better rendering of the last words of *v.* 14. Again in *v.* 15 there is a difficulty. Although 'point' gives a very poetical turn to the sentence, yet it is more likely that the rendering should be 'the slaughter of the sword.' In *v.* 16 there is no clear indication to whom the commands are addressed: probably the obscurity is left to indicate the confusion among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and that really it made little difference in which direction they turned; though others make the sword to be apostrophised and that it is directed to smite on all sides. For the satisfaction of God's fury see v. 13.

18–23. The sword is now defined as that of the king of Babylon which has two objectives, Rabbah and Jerusalem, though it starts from one place, and part of the route is the same to both. Rabbah had been for a long time the capital city of the Ammonites. In David's reign it had endured a siege and been taken

come forth out of one land: and mark out a [1]place, mark
20 it out at the head of the way to the city. Thou shalt
appoint a way, for the sword to come to Rabbah of the
children of Ammon, and to Judah in Jerusalem the
21 defenced. For the king of Babylon stood at the parting
of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination:
he shook the arrows to and fro, he consulted the teraphim,
22 he looked in the liver. In his right hand was the divination
for Jerusalem, to set battering rams, to open the mouth
[2]in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting, to set
battering rams against the gates, to cast up mounts, to

[1] Heb. *hand.* [2] Or, *for*

(2 Sam. xi., xii: 1 Chr. xx.). Later it was called Philadelphia by Ptolemy Philadelphus, and it now goes by the name 'Ammān. We meet with the Ammonites and their city, one or both, elsewhere in prophecy (*vv.* 28–32: xxv. 1–7: Jer. xxv. 21: xlix. 1–6: Am. i. 13–15: Zeph. ii. 8, 9). For their attitude to Nebuchadrezzar at this time cp. note at the end of this chapter. At a certain stage on his march where a finger-post (Heb. hand) points out the two roads, the king of Babylon is pictured very graphically as divining which route he shall choose at the parting of the ways. Three forms of divination are mentioned:—(*a*) the shaking of the arrows: this is called *belomancy.* Arrows would be inscribed with the names of the two towns and they would be shuffled together, and the king would draw one; but, according to the Septuagint, rhabdomancy, i.e. divination with wands, is intended; (*b*) the consulting the teraphim, i.e. most probably household gods. The teraphim are mentioned several times in the Bible (Gen. xxxi. 19, 34: Judg. xvii. 5: 1 Sam. xv. 23 where their worship is denounced: xix. 13 from which some have concluded that their form was that of a mummified human head: Hos. iii. 4: Zech. x. 2 where speaking vanity is attributed to them); (*c*) the third form of divination is the inspection of the liver of a sacrifice. This was called hepatoscopy, and conclusions were formed from the convulsions of the liver of the newly sacrificed victim, or from its colour or shape. Some would combine (*a*) and (*b*) and hold that the arrows were shaken in front of the teraphim. The last of the three was practised in Rome: the person who inspected the entrails or liver was called there *extispex.*

The lot fell for the march against Jerusalem since that came to his right hand, i.e. his right hand drew the arrow marked with the name of that city, which is called 'the defenced' and therefore had to be besieged with battering rams and mounts and forts (so iv. 2 and in xxvi. 9 of the siege of Tyre by Nebuchadrezzar). The Hebrew word translated 'in (*marg.* for) the slaughter' is of rare

23 build forts. And it shall be unto them as a vain divination
in their sight, which have sworn oaths unto them: but he
bringeth iniquity to remembrance, that they may be
taken.
24 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye have
made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your
transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings
your sins do appear; because that ye are come to
25 remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand. And thou,
O deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose

occurrence and somewhat doubtful meaning: the Greek gives 'with a shout' and this makes the two clauses parallel, referring to the battle cry of the Chaldaeans. All this would seem a useless form of divination to the Jews, who had in time past sworn oaths of allegiance to the Chaldaeans (this appears to be the meaning of the words 'which have sworn oaths unto them'): but Jehovah reminds them of their iniquity by allowing them to be carried into captivity. They are overcome by the chastising hand of God. Others take it that it is Nebuchadrezzar who calls the people's breaking of their oaths to remembrance.

24–27. The prophecy now turns to the destruction of the people and the prince, i.e. Zedekiah. We have already seen (note on *v.* 14) that it is difficult to understand how Zedekiah can be described as 'deadly wounded.' His wickedness is acknowledged (2 K. xxiv. 19: 2 Chr. xxxvi. 12: Jer. lii. 2), but we know nothing of his end in Babylon. He was blinded before he was carried thither. The phrase 'in the time of the iniquity (*marg.* punishment) of the end,' is repeated in a prophecy against Mount Seir (xxxv. 5). It implies that iniquity will bring their end to the people. The mitre (*mitznepheth*) only occurs elsewhere as a priestly covering: here it belongs to the king, though others take it to imply the deportation of the hierarchy: but the regal office has always been considered to have a sacerdotal element in it. The words 'this shall be no more the same,' *lit.* 'this not this,' seem to give no sense. All that they can mean is 'there will be a change.' The following words graphically express the *bouleversement* of the overthrow of Jerusalem. They also remind us of the song of Hannah (1 S. ii. 7) echoed in the Magnificat (Lk. i. 52): 'He hath put down princes from their thrones, And hath exalted them of low degree.' The certainty and thoroughness of the overthrow is emphasised by the threefold repetition of the word, perhaps referring to Nebuchadrezzar's three invasions (for similar threefold repetitions see Jer. vii. 4 'the temple of the Lord,' xxii. 29 'earth'). And this kingdom is to have an end 'until he come whose right it is.'

26 day is come, in the time of the [1]iniquity of the end; thus
saith the Lord GOD: [2]Remove the mitre, and take off the
crown: this *shall be* [3]no more the same: exalt that which
27 is low, and abase that which is high. [4]I will overturn,
overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, until he
come whose right it is; and I will give it *him.*

XXXIV. *A prophecy against the Ammonites.* XXI. 28–32.

The second lot had fallen to the king for the route to Rabbah. So when Jerusalem is destroyed the destruction of that city and its people is to be taken in hand in its turn.

28 And thou, son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith
the Lord GOD concerning the children of Ammon, and
concerning their reproach; and say thou, A sword, a

[1] Or, *punishment* [2] Or, *I will remove &c.* [3] Heb. *not this.*
[4] Heb. *An overthrow, overthrow, overthrow, will I make it.*

There seems to be a clear reference here to the much-disputed words, as the prophet interpreted them, of Gen. xlix. 10 'Until Shiloh come' (see R.V. *marg.* in that passage with Driver's excursus and cp. Zech. vi. 12, 13 and the ὁ ἐρχόμενος of the Gospels, e.g. Matth. xi. 3). It is evident that some person with a right to reign is looked forward to in the future by the prophecy, and thus far it is Messianic.

28–32. This prophecy begins in almost identical language with that against Jerusalem (*v.* 9); 'their reproach' is contained in *v.* 29. The words 'to cause it to devour' (*marg.* 'to the uttermost') are better omitted; they have nothing to correspond with them in *v.* 10. The meaning of *v.* 29 is very obscure. It is not clear who is addressed. The most reasonable interpretation is that it is a judgement upon the Ammonites for their treatment of the prophet and his people. They had had visions of reducing him and them to nothing and had prophesied lies concerning them, so that the prophet might be involved in the general slaughter of king and people (cp. *v.* 25, from which the last part of *v.* 29 is derived). In the next verse the time of slaughter on the part of Ammon is described as over, and the Divine judgement is to be carried out upon Ammon in the land of their birth, i.e. to the South of Palestine. For the blowing with the fire of wrath we may compare xxii. 21. The 'brutish' (i.e. inhuman) men are the hordes of the Babylonian army. The idea of all recollection of the Ammonites as a nation passing away recurs later (xxv. 10).

sword is drawn, for the slaughter it is furbished, [1]to cause
29 it to devour, that it may be as lightning: whiles they see
vanity unto thee, whiles they divine lies unto thee, to lay
thee upon the necks of the wicked that are deadly wounded,
whose day is come, in the time of the [2]iniquity of the end.
30 Cause it to return into its sheath. In the place where
thou wast created, in the land of [3]thy birth, will I judge
31 thee. And I will pour out mine indignation upon thee; I
will blow upon thee with the fire of my wrath: and I will
deliver thee into the hand of brutish men, skilful to
32 destroy. Thou shalt be for fuel to the fire; thy blood
shall be in the midst of the land; thou shalt be no more
remembered: for I the LORD have spoken it.

[1] Or, *to the uttermost* [2] Or, *punishment* [3] Or, *thine origin*

THE AMMONITES.

The connection of the Ammonites with this period of Jewish history is obscure. In Jehoiakim's reign bands of the Ammonites combined with bands of Chaldaeans, Syrians and Moabites to invade Judah, and their invasion was looked upon as a Divine judgement (2 K. xxiv. 2). But in Zedekiah's reign (for Jehoiakim in Jer. xxvii. 1 seems to be a mistake for Zedekiah: see R.V. *marg.*) there seems to have been an attempt at Jerusalem as its headquarters to form a confederacy against Nebuchadrezzar in which Ammon with Edom, Moab, Tyre and Zidon was to share. It was perhaps this deed of theirs that brought about the invasion of Ammon by Nebuchadrezzar, a judgement which had been already prophesied by Jeremiah (xxv. 21) in Jehoiakim's fourth year. Later still, Jewish fugitives in Ammon (as well as in Moab and Edom) returned to Judah after the appointment of Gedaliah as viceroy. Whether all these fugitives took part in Ishmael's conspiracy against Gedaliah which was egged on by Baalis king of Ammon is not clear; but, at any rate, when Gedaliah and his partisans had been killed, Ishmael carried off the people that were left in Mizpah, the seat of Gedaliah's government, to join the children of Ammon. A kind of counter-revolution took place led by Johanan which many of those with Ishmael joined. Very few Jews were left with Ishmael; whilst Johanan's followers made preparations to emigrate to Egypt, an emigration which they afterwards carried out (see Jer. xl.–xliii.).

XXXV. *The first of a series of three prophecies against Jerusalem and the land of Judah, the first being directed against the city with a denunciation against its wickedness.* XXII. 1–16.

XXII. 1 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto
2 me, saying, And thou, son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt
thou judge the bloody city? [1]then cause her to know all
3 her abominations. And thou shalt say, Thus saith the
Lord GOD: A city that sheddeth blood in the midst of
her, that her time may come, and that maketh idols
4 against herself to defile her! Thou art become guilty in
thy blood that thou hast shed, and art defiled in thine
idols which thou hast made; and thou hast caused thy
days to draw near, and art come even unto thy years:
therefore have I made thee a reproach unto the nations,
5 and a mocking to all the countries. Those that be near,
and those that be far from thee, shall mock thee, thou
6 [2]infamous one *and* full of tumult. Behold, the princes of
Israel, every one according to his [3]power, have been in
7 thee to shed blood. In thee have they set light by father
and mother; in the midst of thee have they dealt by

[1] Or, *and* [2] Heb. *defiled of name.* [3] Heb. *arm.*

XXII. 1–5. The opening of this prophecy is in form like that in xx. 4. Here, however, the prophecy is immediately directed against the city which is called 'bloody' (so xxiv. 6), i.e. Jerusalem, because of the violence that was done in it. Our Lord's denunciation of Jerusalem should be compared with this (Matth. xxi. 13: xxiii. 37). She was to be brought to the knowledge of the abominations that were committed in her (xvi. 2: xx. 4). A declaration is made that her time for judgement is to come (xxi. 25), and that her idols would be her ruin. By her falseness to her children she had given occasion to other nations to reproach and revile her (v. 14), whether they were near at hand or far away. The expression 'full of tumult' occurs also in Is. xxii. 2, but the context makes its meaning different.

6, 7. The prophecy turns for the moment to the rulers whose character is denounced again further on (*v.* 27), and whose violence and oppression are notorious. Their lawlessness is expressed in words that allude to the Torah. They have set light by father and mother (Deut. xxvii. 16): they have oppressed or wronged the stranger, the fatherless

oppression with the stranger: in thee have they wronged
8 the fatherless and the widow. Thou hast despised mine
9 holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths. Slanderous men have been in thee to shed blood: and in thee they have eaten upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they
10 have committed lewdness. In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her
11 that was unclean in her separation. And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's
12 daughter. In thee have they taken bribes to shed blood; thou hast taken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by oppression, and hast forgotten
13 me, saith the Lord GOD. Behold, therefore, I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.
14 Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have
15 spoken it, and will do it. And I will scatter thee among the nations, and disperse thee through the countries; and

and the widow (Ex. xxii. 21, 22). The stranger was always an object of care, according to the Law.

8–16. The denunciation returns to the whole population. Sabbath-breaking is again (cp. xx. 13) denounced. Slandering and bloodshed are combined as in the Law (Lev. xix. 16). For the eating upon the mountains see xviii. 6, and for the commission of lewdness cp. xvi. 43. Unlawful marriages (Lev. xviii. 7, 8: xx. 11) had taken place and acts of impurity (Lev. xviii. 9, 15, 19, 20: xx. 12, 17). Bribery (Ex. xxiii. 8: Deut. xvi. 19), unlawful gain (xviii. 8: cp. Ex. xxii. 25) and oppression were all prevalent, combined with a forgetfulness of God (cp. xxiii. 35). For all these things God had manifested His wrath, as indicated by the smiting of the hands (xxi. 14, 17). Their gain had been dishonest (so *v.* 27: cp. Jer. li. 13 R.V. *marg.*) and their violence had spread. When the punishment came they would not be able to endure it. It was sure to come: the actual expression asserting this, 'I the Lord have spoken and will do it,' occurs first in xvii. 24. Then follows the sentence of dispersion (so v. 10). The people are to be purified in the furnace of affliction (cp. *vv.* 21, 22): once holy, they are to be profaned before the heathen (cp. v. 8), with the result that they will again acknowledge the Lord. Some critics

16 I will consume thy filthiness out of thee. And thou shalt be profaned in thyself, in the sight of the nations; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

XXXVI. *A second utterance in which the judgement of the people is announced in a parabolic form: they are to be put in the melting pot, when the siege takes place.* XXII. 17–22.

17 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
18 Son of man, the house of Israel is become dross unto me: all of them are brass and tin and iron and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are the dross of silver.
19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye are all become dross, therefore behold, I will gather you into the
20 midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver and brass and iron and lead and tin into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will lay you there, and melt
21 you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you with the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst
22 thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you.

have wished to emend *v.* 16 and make it read 'I shall be profaned' but this is not necessary.

18–22. There are two ideas conveyed in these verses. The first is that the people are to pass through the furnace of affliction heated by the fire of the wrath of God; the second that in that furnace they will all be rejected like dross; the silver will become dross as Isaiah (i. 22) expresses it. For the use of this simile we may compare Ps. cxix. 119: Is. i. 25: Jer. vi. 30: Mal. iii. 3. The people are compared to the various metals, brass (Jer. vi. 28), tin (Is. i. 25), iron and lead (Jer. vi. 28, 29), that are melted in the furnace, but after all they turn out to be only dross to be rejected. Jerusalem was to form the furnace, and then the fire was to be blown upon them (cp. xxi. 31). The combination 'in mine anger and in my fury' occurs also in Jeremiah (xxxiii. 5), and the pouring out of God's fury is a favourite form of expression with Ezekiel (see vii. 8).

xxxvii. *A third utterance in which the terrible corruption which prevailed among the various classes of the inhabitants—prophets, priests, princes, people—is described.* xxii. 23–31.

23 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
24 Son of man, say unto her, Thou art a land that is not
cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation.
25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof,
like a roaring lion ravening the prey: they have devoured
souls; they take treasure and precious things; they have
26 made her widows many in the midst thereof. Her priests
have done violence to my law, and have profaned mine
holy things: they have put no difference between the holy
and the common, neither have they caused men to discern
between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their
eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.
27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening
the prey; to shed blood, *and* to destroy souls, that they
28 may get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed
for them with untempered *mortar*, seeing vanity, and
divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD,

24–31. The pollution of the land from which she is not cleansed had been described by the prophet in the first of the three prophecies of this chapter (*vv.* 2–4). The withholding of rain was looked upon as one of the Divine punishments for sin (Deut. xi. 17: 1 K. viii. 35, 36). Some difficulty has been felt about the word rendered 'cleansed,' and so long ago as when the Greek version was made a slightly different Hebrew word was read which should be translated 'moistened' or 'drenched with rain.' The conspiracy among the prophets (in the Greek version: 'the leaders') was to commit violence in various forms. The prophets are compared to lions just as the princes are compared to wolves; in both cases they are accused of 'ravening (i.e. rapaciously tearing) the prey.' The priests have broken the ceremonial laws and not observed the sabbath (for similar accusations cp. *v.* 8: Lev. x. 10: xi. 47: xx. 25: Mal. ii. 8: Zeph. iii. 4). The princes (this would include the leading inhabitants) were denounced also in the last preceding prophecy (*v.* 6: cp. Mic. iii. 1), and all three, princes, prophets and priests, are denounced by Zephaniah (iii. 3, 4). The shedding of blood and dishonest gain are also

29 when the LORD hath not spoken. The people of the land
have used oppression, and exercised robbery; yea, they
have vexed the poor and needy, and have oppressed the
30 stranger wrongfully. And I sought for a man among
them, that should make up the fence, and stand in the gap
before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I
31 found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indigna-
tion upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of
my wrath: their own way have I brought upon their
heads, saith the Lord GOD.

xxxviii. *The two adulterous sisters and their wickedness.* xxiii. 1–49.

This whole chapter is a very difficult one and must be read in connection with chapter xvi. It is one long utterance intended to describe the results of the spiritual fornication of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

XXIII. 1 The word of the LORD came again unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, there were two women, the daughters
3 of one mother: and they committed whoredoms in

mentioned above (*v.* 13). In *v.* 28 the prophet recurs to a former utterance (xiii. 10: cp. xiii. 6). There was not one to be found to stand between the land and its destruction (cp. Is. li. 18: lix. 16: lxiii. 5: Jer. v. 1 'seek...if ye can find a man'). If there had been one he would have made up the fence (cp. xiii. 5) and stood in the gap to ward off destruction. But as there was not, destruction came upon the people, and they brought it on their own heads.

XXIII. 2–4. We have here a description in the most realistic language of the spiritual whoredoms of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which are likened to two women (cp. xvi. 45, 48) who committed whoredoms (cp. xvi. 15) first of all in Egypt (see note on xx. 7, and cp. *vv.* 8, 19, 27) in their youth, i.e. when they were but the beginnings of a people. Their names are given as Oholah (*marg.* that is, her tent) and Oholibah (*marg.* that is, my tent is in her), and are attached to Samaria and Jerusalem respectively.

Considerable obscurity attaches to the meaning and significance of these names. While the meaning of the latter given above suits Jerusalem, for the Temple was the final resting-place of the Tabernacle, that of the former is not at all obvious. The Oxford Hebrew Lexicon makes the words practically identical, with the

Egypt; they committed whoredoms in their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the
4 teats of their virginity. And the names of them were Oholah the elder, and Oholibah her sister: and they became mine, and they bare sons and daughters. And as for their names, Samaria is [1]Oholah, and Jerusalem
5 [2]Oholibah. And Oholah played the harlot when she was mine; and she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians *her*
6 neighbours, which were clothed with blue, governors and [3]rulers, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding
7 upon horses. And she bestowed her whoredoms upon them, the choicest men of Assyria all of them: and on whomsoever she doted, with all their idols she defiled
8 herself. Neither hath she left her whoredoms [4]since *the*

[1] That is, *Her tent.* [2] That is, *My tent is in her.* [3] Or, *deputies* See Jer. 51. 23, &c. [4] Or, brought *from Egypt*

meaning of 'a worshipper at a tent-shrine,' while S. A. Cook and Cheyne (*Encycl. Bib.* 3466) amend the forms of both words and make them mean 'tent (or, dwelling) of Jehovah' and 'tent (or, dwelling) of Baal,' but this would be more likely if the names were applied to exactly the opposite cities. We meet with a kindred name in Oholibamah, one of Esau's wives (Gen. xxxvi. 2). All that can be definitely said about them is that they refer to some kind of worship in tents. They are said to have become the Lord's (cp. xvi. 8), and to have had sons and daughters. It was necessary to mention these because of the sacrifices of their children which they are said to have offered (*vv.* 37, 39).

5–10. First of Oholah, i.e. Samaria. Whilst she was the Lord's, she committed spiritual whoredom, i.e. she forsook Him. This began in Egypt (*vv.* 3, 8) and was afterwards continued with the Assyrians. There are three special moments recorded in the books of the Kings when the kingdom of Israel was brought into contact with Assyria: (*a*) when Menahem was king of Israel and Pul king of Assyria; (*b*) when Pekah was king of Israel and Tiglath-pileser was king of Assyria; and (*c*) when Hoshea was king of Israel and Shalmaneser king of Assyria (2 K. xv. 19: xvii. 3). On the first and third occasions tribute was paid by Israel to Assyria. But the allusion here seems to be to something earlier, and corresponds with what would be called in modern language some 'political coquetting' between Israel and Assyria in the reign of Jeroboam II, such as is indicated by Hosea (viii. 9) in language with which Ezekiel may have been familiar: 'they are gone up to Assyria...Ephraim hath hired lovers.' The Hebrew word for 'doted'

days of Egypt; for in her youth they lay with her, and
they bruised the teats of her virginity: and they poured
9 out their whoredom upon her. Wherefore I delivered her
into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the
10 Assyrians, upon whom she doted. These discovered her
nakedness: they took her sons and her daughters, and
her they slew with the sword: and she became a [1]byword
among women; for they executed judgements upon her.
11 And her sister Oholibah saw this, yet was she more
corrupt in her doting than she, and in her whoredoms
12 which were more than the whoredoms of her sister. She
doted upon the Assyrians, governors and rulers, *her*
neighbours, clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding
13 upon horses, all of them desirable young men. And I
14 saw that she was defiled; they both took one way. And

[1] Heb. *name.*

scarcely occurs again except in this chapter (cp. Jer. iv. 30). It was the Assyrian chiefs and leaders that Israel is represented as going after (cp. of Judah *vv.* 12, 23). The word 'neighbours' is questionable for Assyria could hardly be called a neighbour to Israel. The names of the two sorts of officers used here, 'governors and rulers' (*marg.* 'deputies'), are used together by Jeremiah (li. 23, 28, 57) as well as in this chapter and are both borrowed from the Assyrian. The 'rulers' were provincial authorities, much the same as the satraps in the Persian Empire. The key to all the realistic language of the chapter is to be found in the last words of *v.* 7 'with all their idols she defiled herself.' This defilement had been going on ever since her first defilement in Egypt. The consequence is the overthrow of her kingdom at the hands of the Assyrians. A first captivity took place in Pekah's reign (2 K. xv. 29) and a second in Hoshea's (2 K. xvii. 6, 23: xviii. 11), Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser being the kings of Assyria. For the language used in *v.* 10 cp. xvi. 37. Thus God's wrath was executed upon Israel and Samaria was captured (722 B.C.).

11–21. Next of Oholibah, i.e. Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah. Their state is described as worse than that of Israel, and this is in agreement with what Jeremiah says in comparing the two in a passage very similar to this (iii. 8–11). The language describing the Assyrian rulers is almost exactly the same as that used already (*v.* 6). Both sisters acted alike (*v.* 13). The first contact of Judah with Assyria seems to have been in the reign of Ahaz when Tiglath-pileser was king. Idolatrous figures in human form had been portrayed upon the wall with vermilion in the precincts of

she increased her whoredoms; for she saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed
15 with vermilion, girded with girdles upon their loins, [1]exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look upon, after the likeness of the Babylon-
16 ians [2]in Chaldea, the land of their nativity. And [3]as soon as she saw them she doted upon them, and sent
17 messengers unto them into Chaldea. And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their whoredom, and she was polluted with them, and
18 her soul was alienated from them. So she discovered her whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness: then my soul was alienated from her, like as my soul was alienated from
19 her sister. Yet she multiplied her whoredoms, remembering the days of her youth, wherein she had played
20 the harlot in the land of Egypt. And she doted upon their paramours, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and
21 whose issue is like the issue of horses. Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in the bruising of thy teats by the Egyptians for the breasts of thy youth.

22 Therefore, O Oholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from

[1] Or, *with dyed turbans* [2] Or, *the land of whose nativity is Chaldea*
[3] Heb. *at the sight of her eyes.*

the temple (viii. 10: xvi. 17, 28, 29). The human forms were like the Chaldaeans and the rites practised were licentious rites. Joining in these rites made Judah send to Babylon for the Chaldaeans themselves (cp. *v.* 40: Is. lvii. 9, and the way in which Merodach-baladan's ambassadors were received in Hezekiah's reign, 2 K. xx. 12). In the fulfilment of her desires love was turned to alienation, and God also Himself was estranged from Judah as He had been previously from Israel. Then she looked in other directions for objects for her illicit affection: but in what direction exactly is very obscurely hinted at in *v.* 20. It most probably applies to the turning towards Egypt for help, as the people of Judah did several times, instead of to Assyria.

22–35. Jerusalem (Oholibah) had devoted herself to political coquetry with other nations and had become alienated from them: now they are

whom thy soul is alienated, and I will bring them against
23 thee on every side; the Babylonians and all the
Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, *and* all the
Assyrians with them: desirable young men, governors and
rulers all of them, princes and [1]men of renown, all of
24 them riding upon horses. And they shall come against
thee with weapons, chariots, and [2]wagons, and with an
assembly of peoples; they shall set themselves against
thee with buckler and shield and helmet round about:
and I will commit the judgement unto them, and they
25 shall judge thee according to their judgements. And I
will set my jealousy against thee, and they shall deal with
thee in fury; they shall take away thy nose and thine
ears; and thy residue shall fall by the sword: they shall
take thy sons and thy daughters; and thy residue shall
26 be devoured by the fire. They shall also strip thee of
27 thy clothes, and take away thy fair jewels. Thus will I
make thy lewdness to cease from thee, and thy whoredom

[1] Or, *counsellors* Heb. *called.* [2] Or, *wheels*

to come against her (cp. xvi. 37). A list is given of the invaders containing three well known names, Babylonians, Chaldaeans, Assyrians, and three obscure names, Pekod, Shoa, Koa. Of Pekod nothing is certainly known: the name occurs again only in Jer. l. 21, and in Hebrew means 'visitation'; but a people called Pukudu and a city called Pikudu are mentioned in the Babylonian records. Shoa and Koa seem to correspond to Sutu (or Su) and Kutu (or Ku) which occur together on the cuneiform inscriptions as the names of peoples on the Tigris, but Cheyne would have us see in them corruptions of Rehoboth, Ishmael and Jerahmeel (*Encycl. Bib.* 4488). The description of the chiefs is as in *vv.* 6, 12, with the addition here of 'men of renown' (*marg.* 'counsellors'). The word translated 'wagons' (so too in xxvi. 10) means literally 'wheels' (so R.V. *marg.*), and may just as well mean war-chariots as wagons. The enemy are to come in full panoply and are to be the executors of the Divine judgement as well as their own (cp. 2 K. xxv. 6 of Zedekiah, 'they gave judgement upon him'). The Divine jealousy indicates the claim of Jehovah to have the first place in the hearts of His people. The cutting off of ears and nose describes the mutilation of captives taken by the Babylonians (cp. 2 K. xxv. 7) rather than the mutilation of an adulteress as practised in Egypt. There is a picture of such a mutilation from the monuments in Toy's

brought from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift
up thine eyes unto them, nor remember Egypt any more.
28 For thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will deliver thee
into the hand of them whom thou hatest, into the hand of
29 them from whom thy soul is alienated: and they shall
deal with thee in hatred, and shall take away all thy
labour, and shall leave thee naked and bare: and the
nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both thy
30 lewdness and thy whoredoms. These things shall be done
unto thee, for that thou hast gone a whoring after the
heathen, and because thou art polluted with their idols.
31 Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister; therefore will
32 I give her cup into thine hand. Thus saith the Lord
GOD: Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup, which is deep
and large: thou shalt be laughed to scorn and had in
33 derision; [1]it containeth much. Thou shalt be filled with
drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of astonishment
34 and desolation, with the cup of thy sister Samaria. Thou
shalt even drink it and drain it out, and thou shalt gnaw
the sherds thereof, and shalt tear thy breasts: for I have

[1] Or, *too much to endure*

Ezekiel (p. 140). The nation was to be destroyed in detail and to lose all its choicest possessions (*v.* 27 is identical with part of xvi. 39). In this way its spiritual whoredom was to be brought to an end (cp. *v.* 48: xvi. 41: the reference to Egypt is repeated from *v.* 8). Following upon this the alienation of Israel from the peoples with whom she had coquetted is again asserted (cp. *vv.* 17, 22). Mutual hatred is to succeed and Jerusalem is to be stripped of her treasures (xvi. 39); this will leave her as she is described to have been at the beginning (xvi. 7, 22). At last in *v.* 30 we get the spiritual application of all the previous language (cp. vi. 9): it is idolatry and heathenish practices which are meant. Jerusalem had followed Israel; therefore the cup (Jer. xxv. 15) of punishment and of God's wrath is to be passed on from the one to the other. This will cause the people to become 'a scorn and derision to them that are round about them' (Ps. lxxix. 4: cp. v. 14, 15). In *v.* 32 R.V. is to be preferred to R.V. *marg.* The magnitude of the cup intensifies the drunkenness here described (cp. Jer. xiii. 13), which is caused by having to drink to the very dregs of the cup of the wrath of God. So thorough is this drinking to be (Ps. lxxv. 8), that even the sherds of the cup will be gnawed to extract

35 spoken it, saith the Lord GOD. Therefore thus saith the
Lord GOD: Because thou hast forgotten me, and cast me
behind thy back, therefore bear thou also thy lewdness
and thy whoredoms.

36 The LORD said moreover unto me: Son of man, wilt
thou judge Oholah and Oholibah? then declare unto them
37 their abominations. For they have committed adultery,
and blood is in their hands, and with their idols have they
committed adultery; and they have also caused their sons,
whom they bare unto me, to pass through *the fire* unto them
38 to be devoured. Moreover this they have done unto me:
they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have
39 profaned my sabbaths. For when they had slain their
children to their idols, then they came the same day
into my sanctuary to profane it; and, lo, thus have they
40 done in the midst of mine house. And furthermore ye
have sent for men [1]that come from far: unto whom a
messenger was sent, and, lo, they came; for whom thou
didst wash thyself, paintedst thine eyes, and deckedst
41 thyself with ornaments; and satest upon a stately bed,
with a table prepared before it, whereupon thou didst set

[1] Or, *to come*

anything that can be drawn from them. The tearing the breasts is either a sign of great grief or of intoxication. Jerusalem had forgotten God (xxii. 12): she had put God out of sight, that is the idea conveyed by the casting God behind her back, therefore she would have to bear the consequences (*v.* 49: xvi. 58).

36–49. The wickedness and punishment of both Samaria and Jerusalem are again reiterated. This fresh portion of the prophecy begins in an interrogative form such as Ezekiel constantly uses (xx. 4: xxii. 2). The old accusations of adultery and violence and spiritual whoredom are again repeated (xvi. 38: xxii. 2); as well as actual human sacrifices (xvi. 20, 21), the defiling of the sanctuary (v. 11: viii.), and the profanation of the sabbath (xx. 13, 21, 24: xxii. 8). The offering of their children to the idols was followed by entrance into the sanctuary of God, a treating of both worships as on a par, and this was looked upon as profanation. There seems to have been included in this entrance the

42 mine incense and mine oil. And the voice of a multitude
being at ease was with her: and with men of the common
sort were brought drunkards from the wilderness; and
they put bracelets upon the hands of them *twain*, and
43 beautiful crowns upon their heads. Then said I [1]of her
that was old in adulteries, Now will they commit
44 [2]whoredoms with her, [3]and she *with them*. And they
went in unto her, as they go in unto an harlot: so went
they in unto Oholah and unto Oholibah, the lewd women.
45 And righteous men, they shall judge them with the
judgement of adulteresses, and with the judgement of
women that shed blood; because they are adulteresses,
46 and blood is in their hands. For thus saith the Lord
GOD: I will bring up an assembly against them, and will

[1] Or, *She that is old will commit adulteries* [2] Heb. *her whoredoms.* [3] Or, *even with her*

actual rearing of idolatrous altars within the temple and its precincts (2 K. xxi. 4, 5 of Manasseh's reign, but these were destroyed under Hezekiah's reformation; cp. Jer. vii. 30: xxxii. 34). All manner of importations of sources of wickedness even from distant places took place (cp. *v.* 16) in Jerusalem. She made herself attractive to capture these foreign immigrants. The painting of the eyes was just what Jezebel did (2 K. ix. 30): they were painted with kohl or antimony to make them look larger and more beautiful (Jer. iv. 30 'though thou enlargest thine eyes with paint'). All manner of ornaments such as are described in xvi. 11, 12 are put on; and then she places herself on a stately couch or bed of a character such as those described in Esther (i. 6: cp. Prov. vii. 16, 17). In front of her is a table with incense and oil upon it described as Jehovah's (so xvi. 18 'mine oil and mine incense': cp. Hos. ii. 8), because they were rightly His. There she sits and receives her guests with a tumultuous noise of revelry around her (the Greek has: 'with a voice of harmony'): included in the crowd are Sabaeans (this is certainly the right reading, not 'drunkards': the variation occurs in the Hebrew), a people mentioned by Isaiah (xlv. 14) in connection with Ethiopia and therefore well described here as 'from the wilderness.' Cheyne, however, wishes to omit the word (*Encycl. Bib.* s. voc.). Those who were sent for and came were adorned with bracelets and crowns (xvi. 11, 12). The insertion of the word *twain* by R.V. (*v.* 42) shews that the revisers thought of the bracelets being put upon the heads of Oholah and Oholibah; but they really seem to have been put upon those of their lovers. The Almighty is represented as saying

47 give them to be tossed to and fro and spoiled. And the assembly shall stone them with stones, and despatch them with their swords; they shall slay their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses with fire.
48 Thus will I cause lewdness to cease out of the land, that all women may be taught not to do after your lewdness.
49 And they shall recompense your lewdness upon you, and ye shall bear the sins of your idols: and ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

E. A FURTHER COLLECTION OF PROPHECIES DATED 588 B.C. ON THE VERY DAY OF THE COMMENCEMENT BY NEBUCHADREZZAR OF THE FINAL SIEGE OF JERUSALEM (2 K. XXV. 1: cp. Jer. XXXIX. 1). CHAPTERS XXIV., XXV.

XXXIX. *The parable of the caldron and its interpretation.* XXIV. 1–14.

XXIV. 1 Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, the word of the
2 LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the day, *even* of this selfsame day: the king of

that they would commit again their old sins, and so they did. The consequence is that they will be judged by righteous men and will receive the legal punishment for their misdeeds (cp. *v.* 24: xvi. 38). An assembly is to be brought against them (see xvi. 40), and they are to receive violent treatment (Deut. xxviii. 25 'thou shalt be tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth') and to be spoiled (cp. vii. 21). Their punishment was to be stoning, which was the punishment of adulteresses (cp. Deut. xxii. 24), slaughter of their children (xxiv. 21: cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17, and for a specific case 2 K. xxv. 7, Zedekiah's sons), and the burning of their property, like that of Achan (Josh. vii. 24, 25: cp. xvi. 40, 41). It was only by these extreme measures that the pollution of the land would be done away (cp. *v.* 27: xvi. 41), the women would be taught a lesson, and the people would realize the power of Jehovah (cp. vi. 7) and bear the consequences of their sins (so *v.* 35).

XXIV. 1, 2. The dating of the utterance of the parable. On the day itself it is revealed to the prophet

Babylon [1]drew close unto Jerusalem this selfsame day.
3 And utter a parable unto the rebellious house, and say
unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD, Set on the caldron,
4 set it on, and also pour water into it: gather the
pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh,
5 and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones. Take the
choice of the flock, and pile also the bones under it: make
it boil well; yea, let the bones thereof be seethed in the
midst of it.
6 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Woe to the
bloody city, to the caldron whose [2]rust is therein, and
whose [2]rust is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by
7 piece; no lot is fallen upon it. For her blood is in the
midst of her; she set it upon the bare rock; she poured it

[1] Heb. *leaned upon.* [2] Or, *scum*

that a close siege of Jerusalem is commencing.

3–5. The parable follows. A parabolic utterance had preceded (xvii. 2) and the prophet was known as 'a speaker of parables' (xx. 49). Once again we have the title of 'rebellious house' (see ii. 5) given to Jerusalem. The simile of the caldron seems to have been a familiar one at the time and to have been used by others besides Ezekiel (see xi. 3, 7, 11). The thigh and the shoulder, especially the right one (Ex. xxix. 22, 27: Lev. vii. 32, 33), were looked upon as the choicest parts (cp. 1 Sam. ix. 24). The whole of the best of the best animals was to be seethed or stewed in the caldron.

6–14. The interpretation of the parable. The caldron is the city, called 'bloody' because of the scenes of violence that had been witnessed in it; scenes which were re-enacted in the same city centuries later during the siege by the Romans. It had already received this title (xxii. 2), which is also given to Nineveh (Nah. iii. 1). The word 'rust' better represents the Hebrew than 'scum' here and in *vv.* 11, 12: it describes the inherent pollution of the city. The last words of *v.* 6 are very, if not hopelessly, obscure. They imply dispersion, and also universality. It will not be a case of one taken by lot and another left, but all alike will suffer. *V.* 7 implies that the violence of Jerusalem was always obvious, for the blood, which the law ordered, in the killing of animals, to be poured out upon the ground and covered with dust (Lev. xvii. 13: cp. Deut. xii. 16, 24), was left exposed and uncovered on the bare rock, and this made the city more than ever incur the wrath of Jehovah. The woe of *v.* 6 is reiterated in *v.* 9. The pile for the burning and for the heating of the caldron is to be a great one (cp. Is. xxx. 33 'the pile thereof is fire and

8 not upon the ground, to cover it with dust; that it might
cause fury to come up to take vengeance, I have set her
blood upon the bare rock, that it should not be covered.
9 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Woe to the bloody
10 city! I also will make the pile great. Heap on the wood,
make the fire hot, boil well the flesh, and make thick the
11 broth, and let the bones be burned. Then set it empty
upon the coals thereof, that it may be hot, and the brass
thereof may burn, and that the filthiness of it may be
12 molten in it, that the rust of it may be consumed. She
hath wearied [1]*herself* with toil: yet her great rust goeth
13 not forth out of her; her rust [2]*goeth not forth* by fire. [3]In
thy filthiness is lewdness: because I have purged thee and
thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy
filthiness any more, till I have [4]satisfied my fury [5]upon
14 thee. I the LORD have spoken it: it shall come to pass,
and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare,
neither will I repent; according to thy ways, and according
to thy doings, shall they judge thee, saith the Lord GOD.

[1] Or, me [2] Or, is *in the fire* [3] Or, *For thy filthy lewdness*
[4] Heb. *brought to rest.* [5] Or, *toward*

much wood'). After the seething is over, the empty caldron itself is also to be destroyed with all its filthiness (so xxii. 15 'I will consume thy filthiness out of thee'). But the rust of the caldron is indestructible: so the pollution of the people is well nigh irremediable. The insertions in italics in R.V. of *v.* 12 are rather doubtful; the margin is more correct. The filthiness of the people was so ingrained in them that purification was impossible without further punishment. The idea is similar to that in Jer. ii. 22: 'though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God': and also in Is. xxii. 14: 'this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die.' God's decision is immutable: He will not repent ('God is not a man that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent,' Numb. xxiii. 19: cp. 1 Sam. xv. 29), but His judgements will be commensurate with their evil acts.

xl. *Death of the prophet's wife, and the lessons to be deduced from it.* xxiv. 15–27.

The problems of this short section are considerable. The prophet is told of his wife's approaching death. He speaks to the people: is it to announce the calamity that is coming upon him to them? the narrative leaves that unsolved. Then he is to make no lamentation for the dead. Would this strike him in his day as a pitiless command? We must remember that Ezekiel was a priest and that the law limited very much, and in the case of the high-priest practically prohibited, anything like ceremonial mourning for the dead (see Lev. xxi. and cp. Lev. x. 6). This may have arisen as a protest against ancestor worship or kindred beliefs prevalent in old times and still surviving among Eastern nations. Moreover Ezekiel looked upon himself no doubt as under special divine influences, and was ready to endure all and suffer all, if only he could bring God's people back to Him.

15 Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
16 Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of
thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn
17 nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Sigh, [1]but not
aloud; make no mourning for the dead, bind thy headtire
upon thee, and put thy shoes upon thy feet, and cover not

[1] Heb. *be silent.*

16, 17. Ezekiel is to lose his wife, who is called the desire of his eyes (cp. 1 K. xx. 6), but he is to utter none of those lamentations by which the emotions of the Oriental give expression to their grief. His grief is to be a silent inward sorrow unaccompanied by external signs of woe. He is to put on his head-tire or turban, which kept the hair from hanging loose as it would in one distraught with grief (cp. Lev. x. 6). He is to wear shoes or sandals upon his feet, whilst to go barefoot was a sign of sorrow (cp. 2 Sam. xv. 30: Is. xx. 2). He is not to cover his lips (so *v.* 22): this was another outward manifestation of mourning (cp. Mic. iii. 7), enjoined also upon the leper (Lev. xiii. 45). Neither was he to eat the bread of men (cp. *v.* 22). This expression in its English form sounds obscure: but it is to be explained by other passages, e.g. Deut. xxvi. 14: Hos. ix. 7 ('the bread of mourners'): Jer. xvi. 7 ('neither shall men break bread for them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead'). For an injunction to do such a thing we may compare Tob. iv. 17: 'Pour out thy bread on the burial (R.V. *marg.* tomb) of the just.' These customs seem to have been, some of them at any rate, a survival from or introduction of heathen customs at funerals like the

18 thy lips, and eat not the bread of men. So I spake unto
the people in the morning; and at even my wife died: and
19 I did in the morning as I was commanded. And the
people said unto me, Wilt thou not tell us what these
20 things are to us, that thou doest so? Then I said unto
21 them, The word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Speak
unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold,
I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the
desire of your eyes, and [1]that which your soul pitieth; and
your sons and your daughters whom ye have left behind
22 shall fall by the sword. And ye shall do as I have done:
ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men.
23 And your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes
upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye
shall pine away in your iniquities, and moan one toward
24 another. Thus shall Ezekiel be unto you a sign; according
to all that he hath done shall ye do: when this cometh,
then shall ye know that I am the Lord GOD.
25 And thou, son of man, shall it not be in the day when
I take from them their [2]strength, the joy of their [3]glory,

[1] Heb. *the pity of your soul.* [2] Or, *strong hold* [3] Or, *beauty*

burying of provisions with a dead body such as prevailed in Egypt.

18–24. His loss came upon Ezekiel very rapidly and he carried out exactly the commands which had been given him (cp. xii. 7: xxxvii. 7). Seeing what they must have held to be very strange conduct on his part, as they had noticed before (xii. 9) and were to notice again (xxxvii. 18), the people ask him the meaning of it. It is explained to them. They were to lose all that they loved and all that they were proud of. Even their temple was to be profaned, and those who had been left in their own land, when Ezekiel's hearers were carried into captivity, were to be destroyed. When this took place, they would feel it as a shock, but they would do just as Ezekiel had done (cp. xii. 11). Their prostration would be so great that they would not be able to express their grief in any outward demonstration at all. In this way Ezekiel was to be a sign to them (cp. xii. 6, 11: *v.* 27), and they would realize the power of Jehovah.

25–27. When all these troubles came upon Jerusalem, including the capture of the stronghold of Mount Zion ('their strength'), news of them will be brought to the captivity: we hear of the news being brought later in the book (xxxiii. 21). Dumbness is more than once spoken of as

the desire of their eyes, and [1]that whereupon they set
26 their heart, their sons and their daughters, that in that
day he that escapeth shall come unto thee, to cause thee to
27 hear it with thine ears? In that day shall thy mouth be
opened [2]to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak,
and be no more dumb: so shalt thou be a sign unto them;
and they shall know that I am the LORD.

xli. *Short prophecies against Ammon, Moab, Edom and the Philistines.* XXV.

Although this chapter is, in the present arrangement of the book, which is chronological, assigned to the same period as chapter xxiv., yet it really forms the first of a series of chapters denouncing God's judgements upon various heathen nations, which are intended to clear the way for and lead up to the prophecies of the Restoration of the people. Chapter xxv. therefore really belongs, strictly speaking, to the following section, xxvi.–xxxii.

It is interesting to notice that in this series of prophecies Babylon is not included, though in order to reach the number seven, Zidon has somewhat artificially to be counted separately from Tyre. This may be due partly to the fact that these prophecies were delivered in Babylon, where the Jews for the most part met with a very kindly reception, and partly to the view which the prophet took of them as God's instruments in carrying out His plans, and therefore "righteous men" (cp. xxiii. 45).

If this prophecy comes under the last chronological heading (xxiv. 1), the captivity of *v.* 3 cannot be the final captivity under Zedekiah, but perhaps that under Jehoiachin (2 K. xxiv. 11–16).

XXV. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, set thy face toward the children of

[1] Heb. *the lifting up of their soul.* [2] Or, *together with*

imposed upon the prophet, that is to say, silence from any divine message to the people. The dumbness here mentioned is regarded as lasting till the news of the fall of Jerusalem arrived (xxxii. 21, 22: 'my mouth was opened and I was no more dumb'). This dumbness would not extend to utterances about foreign nations which occupy xxv.–xxxii.; and xxxiii. 1–20 is probably misplaced in the present arrangement of the book. But when the time of dumbness was over, Ezekiel would be free to speak again with more confidence that, after such a practical demonstration of his divine inspiration, he would be listened to.

XXV. 1–5. AGAINST AMMON. The children of Ammon, descendants as they were believed to be from an

3 Ammon, and prophesy [1]against them: and say unto the
children of Ammon, Hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus
saith the Lord GOD: Because thou saidst, Aha, against my
sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of
Israel, when it was made desolate; and against the house
4 of Judah, when they went into captivity: therefore behold,
I will deliver thee to the children of the east for a posses-
sion, and they shall set their encampments in thee, and

[1] Or, *concerning*

incestuous marriage of Lot, and therefore kinsfolk of the Jews, had been for more than two years the subject of one of Ezekiel's prophecies (xxi. 20, 28–32), just as Jeremiah also had prophesied about them (xlix. 1–6). Here the prophecy is directed to be spoken actually to that people. The denunciation against them is evoked by the exultation with which they had witnessed the desolation of both the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah each in its turn, just as the Tyrians (xxvi. 2) and Edom (Obad. 11) had exulted over the destruction of Jerusalem (xxvi. 2) and its Temple. They are in their turn to be ravaged and plundered by "the children of the east." This expression constantly occurs in the Old Testament, and is a somewhat ambiguous one. In Gen. xxix. 1 it refers to the inhabitants of Aram: elsewhere it is used as here of nomad tribes further east than those that were in contact with or bordering upon Palestine. Their wealth in camels and cattle, and their abundance of tents is described in Judg. vi. 5. The capital of Ammon was Rabbah, famous for its prolonged siege in David's time. In it was preserved the basalt sarcophagus of Og. The city's destruction by fire had been prophesied both by Amos (i. 14) and Jeremiah (xlix. 2); and the feeling against Ammon affected other prophets also (Zeph. ii. 8–10). Here the prophet carries its desolation still further: what had been a flourishing city was to be simply a resting-place for the herds and flocks of wandering tribes. In post-exilic times the Ammonites seem to have still had, at first, a separate tribal existence (cp. Neh. ii. 19: iv. 7), but to have been gradually merged in the Arabians of the desert: though they are still recognized as a separate people in 1 Macc. v. 6: 2 Macc. iv. 26: v. 7. The capital Rabbah, of which many ruins remain, had a later history and much prosperity in Roman times. A description of the place and the Roman remains still existing there is to be found in Baedeker's *Palestine and Syria*, ed. 3, p. 170.

It seems a little difficult to make out exactly the political relation between the Ammonites and Judah during the last years of that kingdom (see note on the Ammonites at the end of chapter xxi.). They seem to have taken possession of Gad after Israel was carried away captive (Jer. xlix. 1). From this vantage ground 'bands of the chil-

make their dwellings in thee; they shall eat thy fruit, and
5 they shall drink thy milk. And I will make Rabbah a
stable for camels, and the children of Ammon a couching
place for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.
6 For thus saith the Lord GOD: Because thou hast clapped
thine hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced with
all the despite of thy soul against the land of Israel;
7 therefore behold, I have stretched out mine hand upon
thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the nations; and
I will cut thee off from the peoples, and I will cause thee
to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and
thou shalt know that I am the LORD.
8 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because that Moab and Seir
do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the

dren of Ammon' joined in the attack of Nebuchadrezzar upon Jehoiakim (2 K. xxiv. 2: cp. xxi. 29 of Ezekiel). In the early part of Zedekiah's reign they seem to have met in conference with representatives of other states at Jerusalem with the idea of forming a league against Nebuchadrezzar (Jer. xxvii. 3), a policy opposed by Jeremiah; but apparently the proposal came to nothing or the Ammonites would have nothing to do with it, and looked on with satisfaction at the destruction of Jerusalem. In the dispersion that followed we hear of some Jews 'among the children of Ammon' under Baalis their king, among whom was Ishmael the son of Nethaniah who was sent by Baalis to kill Gedaliah the governor appointed by Nebuchadrezzar over the remnant of the people that remained in the land and who actually carried out his commission.

6, 7. These verses are a reiteration of the previous ones. 'Despite,' i.e. contempt, 'of soul' is a phrase peculiar to this prophet (cp. *v.* 15: xxxvi. 5). For the clapping of hands cp. Lam. ii. 15. The stamping of the feet, here used of exultation, is elsewhere used as a figure of disappointment (vi. 11). Twice in these verses (*vv.* 5, 7) the refrain is repeated 'ye shall (thou shalt) know that I am the Lord'; it occurs again in *vv.* 11, 17 (cp. *v.* 14): xxvi. 6: xxviii. 22, 24, 26: xxix. 6, 9, 16, 21: xxx. 8, 19, 25, 26: xxxii. 15. This constant repetition throughout this section of the prophecies is to lay emphasis upon the super-eminent fact that Jehovah is the only God and supreme over all nations of the earth, as they will realize when these judgements come upon them.

8–11. AGAINST MOAB AND SEIR. Seir, i.e. Edom, is treated separately in the next paragraph, and its insertion here may be accidental for the best text of the LXX omits it. With this prophecy against Moab cp. Is. xv.: Jer. xlviii.: Am. ii. 1–3: Zeph. ii. 8–10. The reproach against

9 nations; therefore behold, I will open the side of Moab
from the cities, from his cities which are [1]on his frontiers,
the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and
10 Kiriathaim, [2]unto the children of the east, *to go* against
the children of Ammon, and I will give them for a posses-
sion, that the children of Ammon may not be remembered
11 among the nations: and I will execute judgements upon
Moab; and they shall know that I am the LORD.
12 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because that Edom hath
dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and

[1] Or, *in every quarter* [2] Or, *together with the children of Ammon, unto the children of the east*

the house of Judah is that in time of stress it had no advantage over its neighbours. The meaning of *vv.* 9, 10 is clear: the flank of Moab with its frontier cities, which are the glory of the land, is to be open to attack when Ammon is attacked (*vv.* 2, 4). Of these cities we know but little: they were all East of the Dead Sea. Beth-jeshimoth was across the Jordan opposite to Jericho and theoretically in the territory of Reuben (Numb. xxxiii. 49: Josh. xii. 3: xiii. 20). Baal-meon, also in the tribe of Reuben (Num. xxxii. 38: 1 Chr. v. 8), was known as Beth-baal-meon (Josh. xiii. 17), Beth-meon (Jer. xlviii. 23) and Beon (Numb. xxxii. 2), and is mentioned twice on the Moabite stone of Mesha's reign, on which is also to be found the name of Kiriathaim. Kiriathaim (the Septuagint makes two words of this name, and interprets it 'the city by the sea,' i.e. of course the Dead Sea; though the place itself is some distance from the Sea) is also mentioned in the prophecy of Jeremiah (xlviii. 1, 23) concerning Moab: it was in the territory assigned to Reuben (Numb. xxxii. 37: Josh. xiii. 19). It had already been prophesied of Ammon that the memory of it was to die out (xxi. 32). Once again by these judgements the knowledge of the Lord was to be brought home to the heathen (cp. vi. 7) as well as to His own people.

This prophecy like that about Ammon had its first fulfilment in the subjugation of these peoples soon after the overthrow of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar. In early post-exilic times great trouble arose because of the intermarriage between Jews and Moabites and Ammonites that had crept in contrary to Jewish law (Ezra ix. 1: Neh. xiii.). Moab seems to have disappeared much earlier than Ammon, for the latter seem to have been still a numerous people in Justin Martyr's days (*Dial. c. Tryph.* 272).

12–14. AGAINST EDOM. There always appears to have been a bitter feeling between Jews and Edomites. It shews itself in many of the prophets in their denunciations of Edom (cp. xxxii. 29: xxxv.: Ps. cxxxvii. 7: Is. xxxiv. 5: Jer. xlix. 7–22: Am. i.

hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;
13 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, I will stretch out mine
hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it:
and I will make it desolate from Teman; even unto Dedan
14 shall they fall by the sword. And I will lay my vengeance
upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel; and they
shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according
to my fury: and they shall know my vengeance, saith the
Lord GOD.
15 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because the Philistines have
dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with despite
16 of soul to destroy it with perpetual enmity; therefore thus

11, 12: Obadiah: 1 Esdr. iv. 45). That people are said to have taken an active part in the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, though closely akin to the Israelites by descent. For this above all else they deserved punishment, and it was to come upon them. Their country lay to the south of Moab—we know it as Idumaea in the New Testament—and its extremities are indicated here by Teman and Dedan. Teman was the name of one of Esau's grandsons (Gen. xxxvi. 11) and Temanites are mentioned several times in the Old Testament (1 Chr. i. 45: Job ii. 11: Jer. xlix. 20). As Dedan was in the South, Teman must have been in the North, but it cannot be definitely localized and the use of the name is vague: sometimes it is a place, sometimes a district, sometimes it is identical with the whole of Edom. Dedan seems to have been a great commercial centre (xxvii. 15, 20: xxxviii. 13), and its trade extended over Arabia (Is. xxi. 13: cp. Jer. xxv. 23: xlix. 8). Dedan is represented as a grandson of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. xxv. 3: 1 Chr. i. 32). The Septuagint does not recognize Dedan here at all and had another text. The 'vengeance upon Edom by the hand of Israel' was, in part at any rate, taken under Judas Maccabaeus (1 Macc. v. 3: 2 Macc. x. 15) and it was to be recognized as the Lord's ('Maccabaeus and his men...besought God to fight on their side' 2 Macc. x. 16). They were finally subdued under Judas Hyrcanus (125 B.C.): but it is interesting to note that, a century later, Herod the king was of Edomite extraction.

15–17. AGAINST THE PHILISTINES. These people, the perpetual enemies of Israel, from whom the land obtained its name of Palestine, were originally a non-Semitic part of the population (as is indicated by the fact that they are called in the LXX ἀλλόφυλοι), and were immigrants from Crete. They are constantly denounced by the prophets (see Is. xiv. 29–32: Jer. xxv. 20: xlvii.: Joel iii. 4–8: Am. i. 6–8: Zeph. ii. 4) and psalmists (Ps. lx. 8: cviii. 9). 'Despite of soul' is attributed also to the Ammonites (*v.* 6) and to other

saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites,
17 and destroy the remnant of the sea coast. And I will execute great vengeance upon them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

F. A COLLECTION OF PROPHECIES DATED AT LEAST MORE THAN A YEAR AFTER THE LAST AND DEALING WITH TYRE AND ZIDON. 586 B.C. CHAPTERS XXVI—XXVIII.

In subject matter chapter xxv. connects itself with these chapters, though apparently the prophecies in it preceded these by some months. But whilst chapter xxv. has to do with peoples these three chapters contain a series of five prophecies dealing with two of the richest cities on the borders of Israel, prosperous from their position on the sea-coast—Tyre and Zidon (cp. xxxii. 30).

If the chronological headings are correct, then this section should certainly come later. The number of the month is not stated, so that it is not clear at first sight whether it should precede or follow xxx. 20–26: xxxi. But as the date of the final breach in the wall of Jerusalem is fixed (Jer. xxxix. 2) as the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, and the laying waste of Jerusalem took place in the fifth month (Jer. lii. 12), and in this prophecy (xxvi. 2) Jerusalem is spoken of as 'broken' and 'laid waste,' it is quite clear that the place for these chapters, in chronological order, is after chap. xxxi.

Tyre and Zidon were the subject of prophecy by other prophets (Is. xxiii.: Jer. xxv. 22: xxvii. 3: Joel iii. 4: Am. i. 9, 10: Zech. ix. 2–4). The language of this chapter, as may be seen in the notes, had considerable influence upon the writer of the Apocalypse.

nations (xxxvi. 5). The Cherethites (*v.* 16) are identical with the Philistines, and the LXX in the prophetical books calls them Cretans. They are also mentioned, as a people, in two other places (1 Sam. xxx. 14: Zeph. ii. 5); elsewhere they form one of the two constituent elements of David's bodyguard of mercenaries, the Pelethites being the other (2 Sam. viii. 18: xv. 18: xx. 7, 23: 1 K. i. 38, 44: 1 Chr. xviii. 17). For 'furious rebukes' see v. 15 and for the refrain at the completion of the prophecy see vi. 7. The Philistines, as a people, lost their separate existence in later times.

xlii. *First prophecy against Tyre.* xxvi.

XXVI. 1 And it came to pass in the eleventh year,
in the first *day* of the month, that the word of the LORD
2 came unto me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyre hath
said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken *that was* the
gate of the peoples; she is turned unto me: I shall be
3 replenished, now that she is laid waste: therefore thus
saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre, and
will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the
4 sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy
the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers: I will also
5 scrape her dust from her, and make her a bare rock. She
shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of
the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD: and she
6 shall become a spoil to the nations. And her daughters

XXVI. 1–14. AGAINST TYRE. The ejaculation used by Tyre against Jerusalem occurs also in xxv. 3 ('Aha, against My sanctuary') and xxxvi. 2 ('the enemy hath said against you, Aha!'). Jerusalem is called the gate of the peoples as being the place through which the intercourse of Assyria and Babylonia with Egypt was carried on. The phrase 'she is turned unto me' implies that Tyre claimed to have taken her place upon her fall as the centre for commercial intercourse. But Tyre, too, was to have her punishment. It came, but it was only after a long struggle under Ethbaal (Ithobaal) II and a siege of thirteen years (585–573 B.C.) by Nebuchadrezzar that Tyre was taken. This prolonged siege is alluded to in a prophecy sixteen years later than the present one (xxix. 18). The 'bare rock' and the 'dust' (*vv.* 4, 12) are perhaps a recollection of the language used by the prophet of Jerusalem (xxiv. 7). Here the dust refers to the ruins of the city, which was planted, so far as its mercantile quarters were concerned, 'on two bare rocky islands' (Baedeker's *Palestine and Syria*, ed. 3, p. 307). Since the time of the siege by Nebuchadrezzar the place has passed through many vicissitudes and is now an insignificant town of about 6000 inhabitants. The daughters of Tyre are the surrounding towns or villages dependent upon it (cp. Josh. xv. 45, R.V. *marg.*) with their inhabitants. The title 'king of kings' is ascribed to Nebuchadrezzar by Daniel (ii. 37) and Artaxerxes is also described as such in the Bible (Ezra vii. 12). Jeremiah had prophesied of 'evil out of the north' (iv. 6: vi. 1, 22: x. 22), meaning thereby invasion of a hostile people: and though

which are in the field shall be slain with the sword: and
7 they shall know that I am the LORD. For thus saith the
Lord GOD: Behold, I will bring upon Tyre Nebuchadrezzar
king of Babylon, king of kings, from the north, with horses,
and with chariots, and with horsemen, and a company,
8 and much people. He shall slay with the sword thy
daughters in the field: and he shall make forts against
thee, and cast up a mount against thee, and raise up the
9 buckler against thee. And he shall set his battering
engines against thy walls, and with his [1]axes he shall
10 break down thy towers. By reason of the abundance of
his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall
shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the [2]wagons,
and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as
11 men enter into a city wherein is made a breach. With
the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets:
he shall slay thy people with the sword, and the [3]pillars of
12 thy strength shall go down to the ground. And they shall

[1] Heb. *swords.* [2] Or, *wheels* [3] Or, *obelisks*

Babylon was almost on the same latitude as Tyre, its invading armies did, as a matter of fact, enter Palestine from the north. The siege is prophesied of (*v.* 8) in very much the same terms as are used of Jerusalem (iv. 2: xxi. 22). The buckler is the shield carried by the soldiers of the invading host and sometimes a number of them were combined to form a shelter from the missiles of those who were being besieged. The Hebrew word for 'axes' is a doubtful one, cp. the R.V. *marg.* of 2 Chr. xxxiv. 6. It is quite clear from some of the expressions used that Ezekiel expected at first that the city would fall much more quickly than it did, for he speaks once of the entrance of the invaders into the city even without a breach having been actually made in its walls. The Babylonian wagons (or, 'war-chariots': see note on xxiii. 24) as well as their whole array had been already described (xxiii. 24, 'they shall come against thee with weapons, chariots, and wagons'; said of Jerusalem). 'The pillars of thy strength,' i.e. thy strong pillars, were the massebahs or obelisks which formed an important element of the Tyrian worship (cp. Hdt. ii. 44), as the outward and visible sign of the presence of the deity. Such pillars or obelisks were constantly denounced among the Jews (Ex. xxiii. 24 'break in pieces their pillars,' cp. Lev. xxvi. 1: Dt. xii. 3: xvi. 22: Hos. x. 2: Mic. v. 13). The exact nature and object of the worship connected with them is still a matter of doubt, but they might

make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the waters.
13 And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the
14 sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I will make thee a bare rock: thou shalt be a place for the spreading of nets; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.
15 Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyre: Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded groan,
16 when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee? Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay aside their robes, and strip off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with [1]trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall
17 tremble every moment, and be astonished at thee. And

[1] Heb. *tremblings*.

stand for a god or goddess: probably those mentioned here stood for Astarté.

The consideration of the wealth of Tyre will be more fitly discussed in the notes on the next chapter. In *v.* 13 we seem to have a recollection of Is. xxiv. 8, 9 ('the joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song'), a passage which follows immediately upon 'the burden of Tyre' (Is. xxiii.). *V.* 14 repeats the sentence passed upon Tyre in *vv.* 4, 5. The words in it 'thou shalt be built no more' need only signify that Tyre should never regain its former position, which, as a matter of fact, it never did.

15–21. In these verses the consequences of the fall of Tyre are enlarged upon. 'The isles' (cp. xxvii. 35), i.e. the places on the coasts of the Mediterranean as well as the actual islands in it, would feel the terror of its fall. 'The princes of the sea,' as we may interpret the expression from what Isaiah says of Tyre 'whose merchants are princes' (xxiii. 8), are her merchant princes who have made their wealth by maritime commerce, rather than the princes of the neighbouring sea-coasts. They are to humble themselves. Sitting upon the ground is one of the outward signs of sorrow (cp. Job ii. 13: Is. iii. 26: Lam. ii. 10), and the trembling 'every moment' is also part of the terror of Egypt (xxxii. 10). Their lamentation was to be taken up (cp. xix. 1: xxvii. 2, 32) in a way that is re-echoed in the lamentation in the Apocalypse (Rev. xviii. especially *v.* 19) over Babylon. Between the two alternative renderings 'of seafaring men' and 'won from the seas' (R.V. *marg.*) there is

they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee,
How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited [1]of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she
and her inhabitants, which caused their terror to be on all
18 that [2]haunt it! Now shall the isles tremble in the day of
thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be
19 dismayed at thy departure. For thus saith the Lord GOD:
When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that
are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon
20 thee, and the great waters shall cover thee; then will

[1] Or, being won *from the seas* [2] Or, *inhabited her*

very little to choose and both are applicable, the second being justified by the geographical position of the city. A difficulty was however felt long ago about the Hebrew construction, and the LXX leaves out the word represented by 'that wast inhabited' and either did not read it at all or treated it as a gloss upon the preceding word. The meaning would then be: 'How art thou destroyed from the seas' (i.e. from being a maritime power). The last expression of *v.* 17 'which caused their terror to be' is asserted of others beside Tyre (xxxii. 23–27, 32). The trembling of the isles is again emphasized (cp. *v.* 15), and the departure of Tyre is her departure from her preeminent position. In connection with *v.* 19 it may be mentioned that there are still 'ruins visible in the sea' though they are said to be 'merely the remains of overthrown mediaeval walls' (Baedeker *Pal. and Syria*, ed. 3, p. 308). The language of *v.* 20 should be compared with xxxi. 14, 16: xxxii. 18, 23, 24, 27, 32.

The pit is simply the grave, below the ground, into which previous generations had gone down. Other places had been destroyed before: Tyre was not to be looked upon as the only example of a city that ceased to be inhabited. The last clause of *v.* 20 is variously read: the reading of R.V. *marg.*, which is the better, is supported by the Septuagint. The 'land of the living' is a frequent Biblical expression (see e.g. xxxii. 23, 27, 32: Ps. xxvii. 13). The R.V. 'a terror' (*v.* 21) must mean a source of terror to others who may feel the danger of being brought to a similar condition (cp. xxvii. 36: xxviii. 19, both of Tyre).

It has been objected, with reference to this prophecy, that it never was completely fulfilled. But we have to remember in this connection (*a*) the constant hyperbole that forms an essential part of the character of Oriental languages; and (*b*) the fact that Divine purpose in its revelation to man has to be clothed in language adapted to human capacity and suitable as a vehicle to bring man to a sense of sin and to a change of his purposes. It is not God who changes, but human conduct, when it is changed, averts what would other-

I bring thee down with them that descend into the pit,
to the people of old time, and will make thee to dwell in
the nether parts of the earth, [1]in the places that are
desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that
thou be not inhabited; [2]and I will set glory in the land of
21 the living: I will make thee [3]a terror, and thou shalt be
no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never
be found again, saith the Lord GOD.

xliii. *A description of Tyre, its wealth, commerce, and magnificence at the time of its siege by Nebuchadrezzar.* xxvii.

This chapter should be compared with the description of Babylon in Rev. xviii. which evidently looks back to this as its model. Special resemblances will be noted in the commentary.

The text is, in some verses of this chapter, rather doubtful, for they are much abbreviated in the Septuagint.

Ezekiel's geographical knowledge is very extensive, but he would easily acquire such knowledge in Babylonia. A map of the world is still in existence dating from about the time of Hammurabi, i.e. somewhere about the days of Abraham.

XXVII. 1 The word of the LORD came again unto
2 me, saying, And thou, son of man, take up a lamentation
3 for Tyre; and say unto Tyre, O thou that dwellest at

[1] Another reading is, *like*. [2] Or, as otherwise read, *nor set* thy *glory &c.*
[3] Or, *a destruction* Heb. *terrors*.

wise have been the judgement of God. Moreover the Tyre of to-day is not the Tyre of Ezekiel's days. After its subjugation by Nebuchadrezzar, Alexander the Great destroyed a considerable portion of that part of the city which was on the mainland: and the city was also destroyed by the Muslims in 1291 A.D. (see a short sketch of its history in Baedeker *loc. cit.*). Moreover the prophet does not contemplate absolute extinction but only relative: for, where there are fishing nets, there there must be fishers, and fishermen must have homes: they cannot always be upon the waters. Ezekiel tells us himself in a later prophecy (xxix. 18) that Nebuchadrezzar did not get satisfaction from the siege of Tyre: but this does not make him retract any of the words of his prophecy. 'The mills of God grind slowly.'

XXVII. 1–4. The lamentation for Tyre begins with a description of the

the [1]entry of the sea, which art the merchant of the peoples
unto many isles, thus saith the Lord GOD: Thou, O Tyre,
4 hast said, I am perfect in beauty. Thy borders are
in the heart of the seas, thy builders have perfected
5 thy beauty. They have [2]made all thy planks of fir trees
from Senir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to

[1] Heb. *entrances.* [2] Heb. *built.*

city itself for which the prophet is bidden to take up a lamentation as he was ordered to do for the princes of Israel (xix. 1: cp. *v.* 32: xxvi. 17: xxviii. 12: xxxii. 2: Am. v. 1). *V.* 3 should be compared with Is. xxiii. 1, 3. We still, it may be remembered, speak of our commercial harbours as ports of entry, i.e. from or to the sea. Tyre claims for herself that she is 'perfect in beauty,' and this the prophet, speaking for the Lord God, recognizes in a later prophecy (xxviii. 12: cp. xxviii. 7, 17). Her geographical position, partly on two islands, enabled her to be spoken of as in the heart of the seas (*vv.* 25, 27), i.e. in deep waters, while her beauty was due to her builders.

5–25. A CATALOGUE OF THE SOURCES OF THE WEALTH OF TYRE.

It should be remarked that many take *vv.* 4–9*a* and 25*b*–36 as allegorical and referring to Tyre itself with its tributary peoples under figure of a ship; but this seems scarcely necessary: the idea is as old as Jerome. It is adopted by Driver who writes (*Lit. of the O.T.* p. 270):—"Tyre is here represented as a *ship*, to the equipment of which every quarter of the world has contributed its best, which is manned by skilful mariners and defended by brave warriors (*vv.* 1–11), but which, nevertheless (*vv.* 26–36), to the astonishment and horror of all beholders, is wrecked, and founders on the high seas." He is, nevertheless, compelled to add:—"The figure is not, however, consistently maintained throughout." Such a comparison of a state to a ship in difficulties from a severe storm is to be found in Hor. *Od.* i. 14 (O navis, referent in mare te novi Fluctus!), the idea of which is taken from an ode of Alcaeus (18 Bergk). Other similar illustrations are to be found in Wickham's note on Horace's ode. One objection to it is that the figurative language must be broken up by the insertion of 9*b*–25*a*.

Another point to be noticed is the number of names that are common to this chapter and Gen. x. They are Kittim, Egypt (i.q. Mizraim), Elishah, Zidon, Arvad, Lud, Put, Tarshish, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, Togarmah, Dedan, Syria (?i.q. Aram), Uzal, Sheba, Raamah, Canneh (?Calneh), Asshur (?), and perhaps Madai (*v.* 23), Gomer (*v.* 11), Cush (?*v.* 10), Pathrusim or Pathros (?see note on *v.* 10), the Zemarite (?*v.* 11).

5. The fir trees (others translate 'cypresses' which is less probable) of Senir furnish building timber. Senir is said in Dt. iii. 9 to be the Amorite name for Hermon, though it is apparently distinguished from it in 1 Chr. v. 23 ('Senir and Mount Hermon') and Cant. iv. 8 ('the top

6 make a mast for thee. Of the oaks of Bashan have they
made thine oars; they have made thy [1]benches of ivory
7 inlaid in boxwood, from the isles of Kittim. Of fine linen
with broidered work from Egypt was thy sail, that it
might be to thee for an ensign; blue and purple from the
8 isles of Elishah was thine awning. The inhabitants of

[1] Or, *deck*

of Senir and Hermon).' Shalmaneser (see Delitzsch in *Encycl. Bib.* 4362) speaks in an inscription of Saniru as 'the mountain summit at the entrance to Lebanon.'

6. 'The oaks of Bashan' (cp. Is. ii. 13: Zech. xi. 2) like the 'cedars from Lebanon' are almost as proverbial as 'the bulls of Bashan.' They were a kind of evergreen oak which formed large forests in the district to the East of Jordan known in New Testament times as Trachonitis (Luke iii. 1). The word translated 'benches' (*marg.* 'deck') is only used here in connection with shipping: elsewhere it is used of the 'boards' of the tabernacle. Whichever meaning it has, the prodigality is the same, that they should be made of ivory inlaid in box (or cedar) wood (A.V. with its 'company of Ashurites' is due to a misapprehension). The same tree is mentioned in Is. xli. 19 (R.V. *marg.* cypress): lx. 13: and there seems no reason to doubt that the box is the wood used for this purpose. Comp. Verg. *Aen.* x. 137:

"quale per artem
Inclusum buxo aut Oricia terebintho,
Lucet ebur."

This boxwood is represented as coming from the isles of Kittim (cp. Gen. x. 4), that is, from Cyprus and the islands adjacent to it. The name Kittim is by many supposed to survive in the name Kition—the Larnaka of to-day. In 1 Macc. i. 1: viii. 5 the word has a wider application.

7. It is a little difficult to imagine what embroidery there could be about sails: but pictures of embroidered sails from Egypt are to be found in Wilkinson, *Manners and Customs of Egypt*, III. plate 16. The word for sail means something spread out, as we say of ships 'a spread of canvas.' The Septuagint translator seems to have felt the difficulty and translated the word 'couch': 'thy couch was linen with embroidery from Egypt to put on thee glory.' There is a further difficulty that ancient ships did not carry pennons or ensigns: what is implied then must be that the broidered work on the sails enabled one vessel to be distinguished from another, in the way that a standard was used as a signal in war: but the meaning is by no means clear. The 'awning' was a covering over, or tent upon, the deck of blue and purple and came from 'the isles of Elishah.' The name Elishah only occurs elsewhere in Gen. x. 4 as that of a son of Javan. It is therefore concluded that this expression would refer to the Greek colonies on the coasts of Southern Italy and Sicily. The Targum identifies Elishah with Italy.

8. Zidon is of course the other

Zidon and Arvad were thy rowers: thy wise men, O Tyre,
9 were in thee, they were thy pilots. The [1]ancients of Gebal
and the wise men thereof were in thee thy calkers: all the
ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to
10 [2]occupy thy merchandise. Persia and Lud and Put were
in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield

[1] Or, *elders* [2] Or, *exchange*

great Phoenician city, coupled with Tyre in Is. xxiii. and about 40 miles north of it. Arvad still further to the north only occurs again in *v.* 15 and 1 Macc. xv. 23 (Aradus), whilst the Arvadite is mentioned as descended from Canaan (Gen. x. 18) like Zidon (Gen. x. 15). The 'pilots' are mentioned again in *vv.* 27, 29.

9. Gebal, called by the Greeks Byblos and in the present day Jebeil, is now a small village. It lies on the Phoenician coast between Tripoli and Beirût, and is one of the most ancient inhabited places in the world. The Gebal of Ps. lxxxiii. 7 referred to in R.V. (see marginal references) has nothing to do with this place. The Gebalites of Josh. xiii. 5, especially as they are mentioned in connection with Lebanon, may be its people; but whether they are the same as the Gebalite stone-masons of Solomon's days (1 K. v. 18) is doubtful. The 'calkers' recur in *v.* 27; their business was to tread (*calcare*) or press in some such substance as oakum into the seams of a ship (see Hastings, *Dict.* s. voc. Calker). The word 'occupy' of R.V. is also used in an archaic sense as an equivalent for 'to trade with': cp. Luke xix. 13 A.V. Occupy (R.V. Trade ye herewith) till I come, but the rendering of R.V. *marg.* 'to exchange thy merchandise' is to be preferred to that of R.V.

10. There is a similar mention of Persia and Put in xxxviii. 5 where Cush takes the place of Lud. Many critics, however, deny the possibility of Persia being named by Ezekiel, as contributing troops to the Tyrian army (see also note on xxxviii. 5), and various suggestions have been made, e.g. by Prof. Tiele (*Encycl. Bib.* 3662), that Pathros is the place originally mentioned. But we may be content to let the mention of Persia stand, supported as it is in both passages by the Septuagint. Lud, mentioned again in xxx. 5 and Is. lxvi. 19, is generally identified with the Lydians, but others make it the name of a people in North Africa [Ludim in Gen. x. 13 (descended from Mizraim: so 1 Chr. i. 11): Jer. xlvi. 9]; and, following upon this, some critics alter the names to Lub and Lubim (i.q. Libya); there is, however, no sufficient reason for the change. Lud and Put are both mentioned in Judith ii. 23 where the Greek transliterates instead of translating the names. Put is a very doubtful name and occurs also in xxx. 5: xxxviii. 5: Gen. x. 6 (‖ 1 Chr. i. 8): Jer. xlvi. 9: Nah. iii. 9, and perhaps also Is. lxvi. 19 (instead of Pul, if we follow the Septuagint). In Ezekiel and Jeremiah Put is identified with the Libyans: in Nahum the Greek had a different text, and there Lubim are the

11 and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness. The men of Arvad with thine army were upon thy walls round about, and [1]the Gammadim were in thy towers: they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about; they have
12 perfected thy beauty. Tarshish was thy merchant by

[1] Or, *valorous men*

Libyans. We may reasonably assign Put to North Africa, perhaps to the 'parts of Libya about Cyrene' (cp. Acts ii. 10). Others place Put to the south-east of Egypt on the shore of the Red Sea. These three peoples, whoever they were, are represented as adding to the glory of Tyre ('they set forth thy comeliness').

11. Arvad has been mentioned already as furnishing rowers (*v.* 8). Gammadim (R.V. *marg.* 'valorous men') is another difficult word: the Septuagint and Peshitto had a different text and read 'they were watchmen,' making the whole verse refer to the men of Arvad. Another Greek rendering looks as if the reading it followed was 'the Medians.' Aquila, the Jewish literal translator of the Hebrew into Greek, in his first edition translated the word 'pygmies' connecting the word with a Hebrew noun meaning 'a cubit' and making them men of a cubit's stature, and he is followed by the Vulgate. The pygmies known to the Greeks were a race of dwarfs on the Upper Nile. Aquila afterwards, apparently, read the passage differently and translated the word 'completed in number.' This reading, if it were the right one, would naturally connect the word with Gomer (Gen. x. 2), a name which is identified here and elsewhere with Cappadocia (the rendering in the Septuagint of Caphtor). Others still emend the passage and read Zemarite because of the close connection between the Arvadite and the Zemarite in Gen. x. 18 (‖ 1 Chr. i. 16). A trace of the Zemarites is supposed to exist still in the village Sumra to the north of Tripoli. If, as is most natural, we revert to the present Hebrew text, we may look for Gammad in the modern Kamid el-Lôz, situated about half-way between Beirût and Damascus: and it is curious in this connection to find two places, Kumidi (? Gammad) and Sumura (? Zemarite), mentioned in the Amarna tablets (see Cheyne, *Encycl. Bib.* 1639). The custom of hanging up shields is referred to in Cant. iv. 4: 1 Macc. iv. 57. The same expression 'they have perfected thy beauty' is used of the Gammadim and of the builders of Tyre (*v.* 4).

12. Tarshish is mentioned again *v.* 25 ('the ships of Tarshish') and xxxviii. 13 ('merchants of Tarshish'). The expression 'the ships of Tarshish' which occurs several times in the Bible (1 K. x. 22: xxii. 48: Ps. xlviii. 7: Is. ii. 16: xxiii. 1, 14 [in connection with Tyre]) is generally taken as an expression to represent a large merchant vessel, just as we speak of East Indiamen in the same way. But it is much questioned where Tarshish was. It has been identified with Tartessus in Spain, with Carthage (so the Septuagint in Ezekiel and in Is. xxiii. in a passage which refers to Tyre), with Tarsus (so

reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver,
13 iron, tin, and lead, they traded for thy wares. Javan,
Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy traffickers: they
traded the persons of men and vessels of brass for thy
14 merchandise. They of the house of Togarmah traded for
15 thy wares with horses and war-horses and mules. The
men of Dedan were thy traffickers: many isles were the
mart of thine hand: they brought thee [1]in exchange horns

[1] Or, *for a present*

Bunsen and Sayce), or with the Tyrseni or Etruscans, whilst Cheyne, by emending this passage, connects the expression 'ships of Tarshish' and the place with North Arabia. On the whole Carthage seems the most likely. The silver of Tarshish is mentioned in Jer. x. 9. Other places and countries—Edom (*v.* 16 and note), Damascus, Arabia, Kedar—shared the distinction of being the merchants of Tyre.

13. Javan (Gen. x. 2: ‖ 1 Chr. i. 5: Zech. ix. 13 [R.V. Greece]) is the same name as Ionia, and is generally looked upon as representing Greece. Tubal occurs with Javan in Gen. x. 2: Is. lxvi. 19. The name is usually regarded as representing the Tibareni who lived to the north-east of Cilicia. Cheyne imagines it to be a North Arabian district. Tubal and Meshech occur together here and in xxxii. 26: xxxviii. 2, 3: xxxix. 1, and both names seem to have puzzled the Septuagint translator, who gives in this passage etymological renderings for both names. Meshech also occurs in Ps. cxx. 5: 1 Chr. i. 17 (a son of Shem, but in ‖ Gen. x. 4 Mash a grandson of Shem, his father being Aram). The name is identified with the Moschi, who are mentioned together with the Tibareni by Herodotus (iii. 94: vii. 7) and who lived to the east of that people. The slave trade carried on by Ionia is mentioned in Joel iii. 6 and is like that of Babylon in the Apocalypse, where 'souls of men' (the same expression is used here) are reckoned among the merchandise of the place. The 'vessels of brass' (or rather 'bronze') mentioned here in connection with the name of Tubal may recall to us that Tubal-cain was 'the forger of every cutting instrument of brass' (Gen. iv. 22).

14. The house of Togarmah is mentioned again in xxxviii. 6, and Togarmah in Gen. x. 3 (‖ 1 Chr. i. 6). Nothing is really known of this place, but it was most probably Armenia. I am inclined to think that the 'war-horses' of R.V. should be 'horsemen' (cp. Joel ii. 4; Jer. xlvi. 4: 1 K. iv. 26: xx. 20: 2 Chr. ix. 25: Hos. i. 7, etc.), for there seems to be no good reason for ever making the Hebrew word mean a particular kind of horse: and the Septuagint agrees with this interpretation. They might very well have been mercenaries.

15. Dedan we have had already (xxv. 13). Here, perhaps rightly, the Septuagint took the word as 'Rhodians' (so in Gen. x. 4 Dodanim

16 of ivory and ebony. Syria was thy merchant by reason of
the multitude of thy handyworks: they traded for thy
wares with [1]emeralds, purple, and broidered work, and fine
17 linen, and coral, and rubies. Judah, and the land of Israel,
they were thy traffickers: they traded for thy merchandise
wheat of Minnith, and [2]pannag, and honey, and oil, and

[1] Or, *carbuncles* [2] Perhaps, a kind of confection.

corresponds to Rhodanim in 1 Chr. i. 7). In this verse a regular tribute is regarded as being paid to Tyre. Ebony is not recognized by the Septuagint and only occurs here in our present text, but there is no doubt as to the word. 'Every vessel of ivory' is part of the merchandise of Babylon in Rev. xviii. 12.

16. The imports into Tyre from Aram or Syria are next dealt with: the Greek, however, read 'Edom' for 'Aram.' The confusion between the two names is one easily made, and, perhaps, Edom is the right word here. Of the imports, emeralds (*marg.* carbuncles) are mentioned elsewhere in xxviii. 13: Ex. xxviii. 18: xxxix. 11 and correspond to a different Hebrew word from that translated carbuncle (*marg.* emerald) in xxviii. 13: Ex. xxviii. 17: xxxix. 10. It is difficult to distinguish the words: some consider that the word in the present passage means 'malachite.' It seems like 'carrying coals to Newcastle' to speak of importing purple into Tyre from Edom and 'the isles of Elishah' (*v.* 7); it may be there was some special excellence about their goods, or that foreign purple was looked upon as an extravagant luxury (cp. Aesch. *Ag.* 883–909). Purple was amongst the merchandise of the Apocalyptic Babylon (Rev. xviii. 12). 'Broidered work' on fine linen came from Egypt as well as (*v.* 7) fine linen itself. The Hebrew word for 'coral' used here occurs besides only in Job xxviii. 18 and perhaps in Prov. xxiv. 7 (but R.V. 'Wisdom is too high') and is of very uncertain meaning. Toy translates it 'pearls.' The word for 'rubies' is also a rare one, only occurring again in Is. liv. 12. A.V. has 'agate' in both places, with 'chrysoprase' (cp. Rev. xxi. 20) in the margin here. The Septuagint did not know what the word meant, so reproduced the Hebrew. Toy translates 'jasper.'

17. Judah and Israel are here distinguished and the agricultural character of the country is accentuated. An export of wheat and oil to Tyre in Solomon's reign is recorded in 1 K. v. 11 (‖ 2 Chr. ii. 10), and much the same trade went on in post-exilic days (Ezra iii. 7) and in the Apostles' time (Tyre and Sidon were fed from Herod's country, Acts xii. 20). There seems no need to alter, with Cornill, 'Minnith' into 'and spices.' Minnith is a place mentioned in Judg. xi. 33 and, though the exact site is not known, it must have stood in a very fertile district, and its wheat seems from the present passage to have obtained a great reputation. It was in Ammonite territory, and that land paid

18 balm. Damascus was thy merchant for the multitude of
thy handyworks, by reason of the multitude of all kinds of
19 riches; with the wine of Helbon, and white wool. Vedan
and Javan traded [1]with yarn for thy wares: [2]bright iron,

[1] According to some ancient versions, *from Uzal.* [2] Or, *wrought*

a tribute of grain to Jotham (2 Chr. xxvii. 5). No one has yet ascertained what 'pannag' means. R.V. *marg.* following the Targum says 'Perhaps, a kind of confection' and various conjectural emendations have been made, the most commonly accepted being a word meaning 'wax.' A.V. thought of Pannag as the name of a place to go with Minnith. It is, perhaps, just worth mentioning that 'panicum,' one of the Latin names for 'millet,' goes back at any rate to the time of Julius Caesar (*B. C.* II. 22). A kind of grain would suit the context here. Balm and honey were carried into Egypt from Palestine in Jacob's days (Gen. xxxvii. 25: xliii. 11): the former was one of the products of Gilead (Jer. viii. 22 'Is there no balm in Gilead?').

18, 19. Damascus was one of the oldest and wealthiest cities of early times: it was the capital of Syria, and the mention of it here strengthens the argument in favour of 'Edom' being the right reading in *v.* 16. Helbon is the modern Helbûn, a few miles to the north-west of Damascus. It is supposed that the Chalybonian wine of the Persian Court (Strabo xv. 735) came from the vineyards here. These still exist 'but the grapes are now all dried to form raisins,' the village being a Mahommedan one (Baedeker, *Pal. and Syria*, p. 369). At the end of this verse and the beginning of the next, there is considerable difficulty about the text; for 'white wool. Vedan and Javan' becomes in the Septuagint 'wool from Miletus, and wine,' whilst a word translated 'yarn' a little later becomes 'from Asel' (R.V. *marg.* 'from Uzal'). The wool of Miletus was of most noticeable quality. Vergil speaks of 'Milesia vellera' (*G.* iii. 306: iv. 335), but the insertion of this name here is pure guesswork. The Hebrew might mean 'wool from Zachar.' The curious name Vedan, elsewhere unknown, seems to shew that the Hebrew is corrupt, though names beginning with the letter V do actually occur, e.g. Vaheb in Numb. xxi. 14. Glaser identifies Vedan with Waddân near Medina in Arabia, but this does not agree with its combination with Javan. The Septuagint omits the word. Javan has occurred already (*v.* 13). The various suggested emendations of the text need scarcely be recorded: but if Uzal (R.V. *marg.*) is right rather than 'yarn,' this points like Vedan to an Arabian source for the products of this verse. Azal is said (*Encycl. Bib.* 5239) to have been the ancient name of the capital of Yemen and the name would then naturally connect itself with Uzal the son of Joktan (Gen. x. 27: ‖ 1 Chr. i. 21). 'Wrought iron' (R.V. *marg.*) is a better rendering than 'bright iron': but the word used is a doubtful one.

20 cassia, and calamus, were among thy merchandise. Dedan
21 was thy trafficker in precious cloths for riding. Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they were the merchants of thy hand; in lambs, and rams, and goats, in these were
22 they thy merchants. The traffickers of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy traffickers: they traded for thy wares with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold.
23 Haran and Canneh and Eden, the traffickers of Sheba,

The word for 'cassia' only occurs once besides (Ex. xxx. 24 R.V. *marg.* 'costus'); it is a preparation from the bark of a shrub of the Cinnamon order. Calamus (cp. Ex. xxx. 23) is a fragrant reed of some sort, which came 'from a far country' (Jer. vi. 20).

20. Dedan, about which there was some doubt in *v.* 15, is here represented as producing precious saddle cloths, with which we may compare the 'rich carpets' of Judg. v. 10. Owing, however, to the fact that the word used here does not occur elsewhere, the meaning is extremely doubtful. Some refer the word to animals not to saddle cloths.

21. Kedar, in the north of Arabia, and east of Palestine, was a country famous for small cattle (Is. lx. 7 'All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee'). Its princes were tributary to Tyre; that is the meaning of 'merchants of thy hand.'

22. Sheba occurs again later (*v.* 23: xxxviii. 13), and also, with Raamah, in Gen. x. 7 (‖ 1 Chr. i. 9 'Raama'). The names are connected with Arabia; Sheba produces spices and gold according to Is. lx. 20 ('they all shall come from Sheba: they shall bring gold and frankincense') and Jer. vi. 20 ('To what purpose cometh there to me frankincense from Sheba?'); cp. also xxxviii. 13. The exact position of Raamah is uncertain: it was near the Persian gulf. 'The chief of all spices' include 'flowing myrrh,' 'sweet cinnamon,' 'sweet calamus' and cassia, for these are called 'the chief spices' (Ex. xxx. 23): to these must be added aloes (Cant. iv. 14), cp. Milton, *P. L.* IV. 161 (quoted by Toy):

> Off at sea north-east winds blow
> Sabean odours from the spicy shore
> Of Araby the blest.

It is difficult to say what precious stones are meant in *v.* 22. Malachite, turquoise, and rubies are perhaps indicated, as well as pearls, onyx and carnelian (see *Encycl. Britannica* s. voc. Arabia).

23. Haran (Gen. xi. 31: 2 K. xix. 12: ‖ Is. xxxvii. 12) is the place which was the intermediate stage between Ur and Canaan in the migrations of Abraham (cp. Acts vii. 4). It was about 500 miles N.W. of Ur and not far from Edessa: it is on the east side of the Euphrates. Canneh is perhaps Calneh, for this is the reading of one Heb. MS., and is a place of uncertain identification. There were two places of the name, one in Nimrod's kingdom (Gen. x. 10), the other in North Syria (Am. vi. 2: in Is. x. 9 Calno); the latter is the

24 Asshur *and* Chilmad, were thy traffickers. These were
thy traffickers in choice wares, in [1]wrappings of blue and
broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with
25 cords and made of cedar, among thy merchandise. The
ships of Tarshish were thy caravans for thy merchandise:
and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the
26 heart of the seas. Thy rowers have brought thee into

[1] Or, *bales*

more likely. Eden like Haran is mentioned in 2 K. xix. 12 (‖ Is. xxxvii. 12: cp. Amos i. 5). No certain identification of it has yet been made: R.V. *marg.* has Beth-eden in Am. i. 5. For Sheba see *v.* 22. Asshur is counted among the sons of Shem (Gen. x. 22: ‖ 1 Chr. i. 17). The name cannot mean Assyria here, and it must be connected with the Telassar of 2 K. xix. 12 (‖ Is. xxxvii. 12) in which the children of Eden, a place also mentioned in this verse, are said to dwell. The last name Chilmad does not occur elsewhere. It will be noticed that it has no conjunction before it. So early as the Targum conjecture was at work and for Chilmad 'and Media' was taken to be the right reading. This has been generally accepted.

24. The imports from the places and districts of the last verse are given. The text of this verse is very uncertain. The word for 'choice wares' (perhaps rather 'materials' or 'robes') does not occur anywhere else but is akin to a word which occurs in xxiii. 18: xxxviii. 4 and is translated by R.V. in the first place 'most gorgeously,' in the second 'in full armour.' 'Wrappings' (*marg.* 'bales') represents another unique word, and may be better translated, with Toy, 'mantles.' A 'blue' material has been already mentioned (*v.* 7) and 'broidered work' has occurred twice (*vv.* 7, 16). 'Chests' is another very doubtful word: it may mean 'carpets.' 'Of rich apparel' once more represents a word that does not occur elsewhere; it may be Assyrian in its origin and mean cloth with two strands of colour in it (see *Oxf. Heb. Lex.* s. voc. בִּרְמִים). The same authority makes the word for 'made of cedar,' not occurring elsewhere, simply mean 'strong.'

25. For the ships of Tarshish see *v.* 12. The use of the word 'caravans' as applied to ships is rather strange, and the Hebrew construction is unusual: there is probably some corruption of the text. A.V. has, quite differently, 'The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market,' but this does not seem any more satisfactory. More probable still is Aquila's reading of the Hebrew, 'ministered to thee.' For 'in the heart of the seas,' cp. *vv.* 4, 26, 27.

26. 'Great waters' should be rather, as R.V. translates, e.g. in Numb. xxiv. 7 'many waters,' implying that the knowledge of Tyre had spread far and wide. The destruction to

great waters: the east wind hath broken thee in the heart
27 of the seas. Thy riches, and thy wares, thy merchandise,
thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the [1]occupiers
of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that are in
thee, [2]with all thy company which is in the midst of thee,
shall fall into the heart of the seas in the day of thy ruin.
28 At the sound of the cry of thy pilots the [3]suburbs shall
29 shake. And all that handle the oar, the mariners, *and* all
the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships,
30 they shall stand upon the land, and shall cause their voice
to be heard over thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall
cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow them-
31 selves in the ashes: and they shall make themselves bald
for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall
weep for thee in bitterness of soul with bitter mourning.
32 And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for

[1] Or, *exchangers* [2] Or, *and in* [3] Or, *waves*

shipping due to the east wind is alluded to in Ps. xlviii. 7,

With the east wind
Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish.

27–31. Utter destruction and the lamentation that was to follow is prophesied in these verses. The 'pilots' (cp. *vv.* 28, 29) of Tyre were mentioned in *v.* 8, the 'calkers' in *v.* 9. For the 'occupiers' of merchandise see note *v.* 9. The word 'company' means the multitude assembled in Tyre. 'Suburbs' (cp. xlv. 2: xlviii. 15, 17) were really the pasture lands round a city. The Septuagint read a different word and translated 'they shall be afraid with terror.' The translation of R.V. *marg.* is not tenable. The correspondence between *vv.* 29–31 and Rev. xviii. 17–19 should be noticed: 'And every shipmaster, and every one that saileth any whither, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood afar off, and cried out...And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning.' The casting up of dust upon the heads as a sign of woe is mentioned in Lam. ii. 10 (cp. Josh. vii. 6); and for the wallowing or rolling in ashes cp. Jer. vi. 26 ('wallow thyself in ashes'): xxv. 34. The latter implies more drastic self-humiliation than the casting of ashes on the head. The making oneself bald in grief (Mic. i. 16) is frequently mentioned in the prophets. Certain kinds of such operations were forbidden by the Law (Lev. xix. 27: Deut. xiv. 1: cp. Lev. xxi. 5), probably because of their religious significance amongst neighbouring peoples.

32–36. The form of lamentation is given here just as it is over

thee, and lament over thee, *saying*, Who is there like
Tyre, like her that is brought to silence in the midst of
33 the sea? When thy wares went forth out of the seas,
thou filledst many peoples; thou didst enrich the kings of
the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy
34 merchandise. [1]In the time that thou wast broken by the
seas in the depths of the waters, thy merchandise and all
35 thy company did fall in the midst of thee. All the
inhabitants of the isles are astonished at thee, and their
kings are horribly afraid, they are troubled in their
36 countenance. The merchants among the peoples hiss at
thee; thou art become [2]a terror, and thou shalt never be
any more.

xliv. *The judgement of the prince of Tyre.* xxviii. 1–10.

XXVIII. 1 The word of the LORD came again unto
2 me, saying, Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre, Thus
saith the Lord GOD: Because thine heart is lifted up, and
thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the

[1] According to some ancient versions, *Now thou art broken...are fallen &c.*
[2] Or, *a destruction* Heb. *terrors.*

Babylon in Rev. xviii. 'Who is there like Tyre?' (*v.* 32) corresponds with 'What city is like the great city?' (Rev. xviii. 18). So with *v.* 33 cp. 'The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her' (Rev. xviii. 15) and 'wherein were made rich all that had their ships in the sea by reason of her costliness' (Rev. xviii. 19). The elegy takes almost a poetic form. The breaking of Tyre by the seas is to be explained by xxvi. 19. 'All thy company' recurs from *v.* 27 (see note). The hissing is not a hissing of contempt, but of startled surprise. For the words 'thou art become a terror' (*marg.* destruction) see xxvi. 21.

The actual fate of Tyre is the subject of xxix. 17–20.

XXVIII. 1–10. The prophet now turns to the ruler of Tyre called 'prince' in *v.* 1 and 'king' in *v.* 12. This was Ithobaal II (the name is identical in form with that of Eth-baal, the father of Jezebel, Ahab's queen, and king of Zidon). The language of *vv.* 2, 18, 19 is again the model for that of Rev. xviii. 7, 8: 'She (i.e. Babylon) saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and shall in no wise see mourning. Therefore in one day

[1]midst of the seas; yet thou art man, and not God, though
3 thou didst set thine heart as the heart of God: behold,
thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they
4 can hide from thee: by thy wisdom and by thine under-
standing thou hast gotten thee [2]riches, and hast gotten
5 gold and silver into thy treasures: by thy great wisdom
and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy [2]riches, and
6 thine heart is lifted up because of thy [2]riches: therefore
thus saith the Lord GOD: Because thou hast set thine
7 heart as the heart of God; therefore behold, I will bring
strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they
shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom,
8 and they shall [3]defile thy brightness. They shall bring
thee down to the pit; and thou shalt die the deaths of them
9 that are slain, in the heart of the seas. Wilt thou yet say
before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou art man,
and not God, in the hand of him that [4]woundeth thee.

[1] Heb. *heart.* [2] Or, *power* [3] Or, *profane* [4] Or, *profaneth*

shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine.' The king like his city sits in the midst of the seas and is 'as a god.' We may compare the end of Herod in Acts xii. 21–23 who was saluted with the shout 'The voice of a god, and not of a man.' So the king here claims divinity (cp. Is. xiv. 13, 14). *Vv.* 3–5 are sarcastic. Of late it has been argued that the Daniel of this passage could not be the prophet Daniel, notwithstanding that we are told that to him with the three children God gave 'knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom' and that 'Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams' (Dan. i. 17). The reason given for this is that the third person mentioned, where Daniel occurs in a previous passage (xiv. 14, 20, see note there), ought to be an ancient hero and not a modern one. It has been suggested that Enoch should take his place (see Cheyne in *Encycl. Bib.* s. voc. Enoch), especially as the Hebrew of Ecclus. xliv. 16 (lately discovered) makes Enoch 'an example of knowledge' instead of 'of repentance' (the Greek version). But this hardly seems a sufficient reason for wantonly altering the Massoretic text. It would scarcely have been deemed necessary, but for the late date ascribed by modern critics to the Book of Daniel, which however in any case may be considered to have a historical basis. 'Riches' or 'power' (R.V. *marg.*) are equally admissible translations. 'Thine heart is lifted up' (*v.* 5) looks back to *v.* 1, just as *v.* 6 looks back to *v.* 2. The strangers were the hosts of Nebuchadrezzar drawn from many nations (cp. xxx. 11 'He and

10 Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

xlv. *The lamentation over the king of Tyre, as the representative of the magnificence of Tyre itself.* xxviii. 11–19.

It should be remembered that in this passage the language is founded upon (*a*) the account of the Garden of Eden; (*b*) the descriptions in Exodus of (i) the giving of the law; (ii) the breastplate of the high-priest; and (iii) the cherubim overshadowing the mercy-seat.

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
12 Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Thou sealest
13 up the [1]sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou wast in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was

[1] Or, *measure* Or, *pattern*

his people with him, the terrible of the nations,' xxxi. 12 'Strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off': and so xxxii. 12). The rest of the verse should be compared with *v.* 17 for its phraseology. 'Brightness' is equivalent to 'splendour.' 'In the heart of the seas' is used of Tyre's position in the previous prophecy (xxvii. 4, 25). 'The death of the uncircumcised' implies that it is the death of an outcast. For the words with which this prophecy closes cp. xvii. 21.

11–19. These verses form the elegy over the king of Tyre, as its representative. In xxvii. 32–36 there was a lamentation over Tyre itself. The king is called prince in the previous prophecy (*v.* 2). Here his former human excellences and wealth are described. The meaning of the word translated 'sum' (*marg.* 'measure,' or 'pattern') is vague, but is intended to convey the idea of 'perfection' (A. B. Davidson): it only occurs again in xlviii. 10.

The king's wisdom has been already (*v.* 3) described as greater than that of Daniel: and perfection of beauty is assigned to Tyre in xxvii. 3, 4. The whole passage of course is biting sarcasm.

13. There is considerable difficulty in understanding what the prophet means when he speaks both of the king of Tyre and of the king of Assyria (xxxi. 8, 9) as having to do with Eden the garden of God (mentioned also in xxxvi. 35: Is. li. 3: Joel ii. 3). It is evident, at any rate, that the reference must be to the garden of Eden in which our first parents are said to have been

thy covering, the [1]sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the [2]emerald, and the [3]carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was in thee; in the day that thou

[1] Or, *ruby* [2] Or, *carbuncle* [3] Or, *emerald*

placed. It has been held that Ezekiel is drawing here from other traditions about Eden than those contained in the Bible which were current in Babylonia, but the existence of such traditions has not yet been proved. From the context of these passages we can only gather that the words imply that the kings mentioned were in the wealthiest and most fertile places that could be imagined. The wealth here is accentuated by the catalogue of precious stones that the king of Tyre was covered with; in the other passage the fertility is emphasized by the description of the trees of the garden. The precious stones brought to Tyre are mentioned in xxvii. 16, 22. The list of precious stones given here should be compared with that of those in the high-priest's breastplate (Ex. xxviii. 17: xxxix. 10): where the names occur in a somewhat different order, and the third row of three is left out altogether. Such a list recurs in the list of the twelve precious stones which formed the foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 19, 20). If we follow the renderings of R.V. there are six stones of that passage identical with six in the list here. Because of the etymology of the Hebrew name of the first stone, meaning 'redness,' R.V. *marg.* identifies it with the 'ruby.' Others identify it with 'carnelian' which is red, while the sardius is brown. The 'topaz' of the Greeks is in all probability not the same stone as the topaz of to-day and corresponds rather with the chrysolite or peridot. It is mentioned in Job (xxviii. 18) as coming from Ethiopia, and the Hebrew name is perhaps an exotic word connected with a Sanskrit one meaning 'yellow.' The 'diamond' here is another doubtful rendering. The *Oxf. Heb. Lex.* suggests jasper or onyx, deriving the name from a root signifying 'hardness.' The 'beryl,' too, is doubtful, the stone mentioned being named Tarshish from the locality from which it came. It is mentioned also in i. 16: x. 9 ('stone of Tarshish' R.V. *marg.*), Cant. v. 14 (R.V. *marg.* 'topaz'). For the 'onyx' the R.V. *marg.* gives in some places (e.g. Ex. xxviii. 9) 'beryl.' This illustrates the great difficulty that critics have in identifying the various stones, and the older versions do not help us very much. The jasper and the sapphire are generally recognized, though the latter name includes lapis lazuli (Rev. xxi. 19 R.V. *marg.*). The emerald and the carbuncle (order reversed in R.V. *marg.*) are also doubtful names. The former is by some held to stand for malachite, the latter, following the Greek version, is generally taken to mean the emerald. There is much obscurity about all these names, and

14 wast created they were prepared. Thou wast the anointed
cherub that covereth: and I set thee, *so that* thou wast
upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and
15 down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect
in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till

the difficulty about some of them is enhanced by the unknown linguistic source from which they came. The Greek version gives twelve names here instead of nine, beside adding gold and silver in the middle of the list. Once again the tabrets and pipes of *v.* 13 seem a little out of place and the settings of the precious stones would come in here more naturally. The Hebrew word for 'pipes' does not occur elsewhere: but what the two words mean exactly is not clear. Perhaps 'settings and sockets' (*Oxf. Heb. Lex.* 666a) is as near as we can get. The day of the king's creation (cp. *vv.* 13, 15) was the day of his birth. From that day forward his magnificence was assured.

14. The prophet now goes on to call him by another title full of obscurity, 'the anointed cherub that covereth.' The idea is evidently led on to from the mention of Eden. The translation may equally well run, with the Greek, 'thou wast with the cherub.' The thought to be grasped is that, as Tyre claimed to be equal with God (*v.* 2), so here the king looks upon himself as entitled to be in Paradise with the attendant satellites of God and to be one of their number, and is treated as being there till he falls like Adam into sin. But the words translated 'anointed' and 'that covereth' are difficult, especially the former. The word 'anointed' is more probably 'extended' and then there may be an allusion to the cherubim and the mercy-seat where the outward token of God's presence was to be seen. Cp. Ex. xxv. 20 'And the cherubim shall spread out their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings' (so 1 K. viii. 7). If the king was with God then he would be 'upon the holy mountain of God': for the constant idea in the O.T. is of the presence of God upon a mountain (cp. xx. 40: Ex. xxiv. 9: Is. xiv. 13). The stones of fire describe the fire on the mountain top in the presence of God; 'mount Sinai was altogether on smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire' (Ex. xix. 18): and when we read of the king here walking up and down in the midst of the stones of fire during his time of perfection, we are reminded of the question and answer, 'Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously...he shall dwell on high' (Is. xxxiii. 14–16).

15–19. But the king's fall was to come when his unrighteousness appeared. The wealth of Tyre brought with it oppression and violence and so the king and the covering cherub, whether they are one or two, are to be destroyed and cast out from the mountain of God and from the midst of the stones of fire where nothing profane could

16 unrighteousness was found in thee. By the multitude of
thy traffic they filled the midst of thee with violence, and
thou hast sinned: therefore have I cast thee as profane
out of the mountain of God; and I have destroyed thee,
O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.
17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou
hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I
have cast thee to the ground, I have laid thee before kings,
18 that they may behold thee. By the multitude of thine
iniquities, in the unrighteousness of thy traffic, thou hast
profaned thy sanctuaries; therefore have I brought forth
a fire from the midst of thee, it hath devoured thee, and
I have turned thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight
19 of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee
among the peoples shall be astonished at thee: thou art
become [1]a terror, and thou shalt never be any more.

xlvi. *A short prophecy against Zidon, followed by an intimation of the return of Israel to its own land.* xxviii. 20–26.

20 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
21 Son of man, set thy face toward Zidon, and prophesy
22 against it, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I

[1] Or, *a destruction* Heb. *terrors.*

exist. Pride and corruption of intellect are the causes of the king's fall, as well as immoral trading and sacrilege, and other kings are to see his degradation. He is to be entirely destroyed by fire from within (cp. xxx. 8, 14, 16, and Rev. xviii. 8 'she [i.e. Babylon] shall be utterly burned with fire'). Each prophecy against Tyre concludes in similar language (cp. *v.* 19 with xxvi. 21, xxvii. 36).

20–24. AGAINST ZIDON. A separate prophecy deals with Zidon, the great rival of Tyre, believed by some to have been in early times the greater of the two cities. At any rate Zidon is mentioned in Genesis (x. 15, 19), while Tyre does not appear there. In Isaiah (xxiii.) 'the burden of Tyre' includes a denunciation of Zidon (*vv.* 4, 12). It was a strong place (Josh. xix. 28); its kings are mentioned by Jeremiah (xxv. 22: xxvii. 3); and Ezekiel (xxxii. 30) also mentions the slaughter of its inhabitants. Its people are mentioned with those of Tyre in the

am against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall have executed judgements in her, and shall
23 be sanctified in her. For I will send into her pestilence and blood in her streets; and the wounded shall [1]fall in the midst of her, with the sword upon her on every side;
24 and they shall know that I am the LORD. And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor a grieving thorn of any that are round about them, that did despite unto them; and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

25 Thus saith the Lord GOD: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land

[1] Or, *be judged*

Acts (xii. 20) and the Syro-phoenician woman, a Greek or Gentile, who entreated our Lord for her daughter came out of the borders of Tyre and Sidon (Mark vii. 24, 26). The judgement of Zidon is, in the prophet's declaration, made to redound to the glory of God (cp. xxxix. 13), just as the destruction of the Egyptians at the Red Sea is said to bring Him honour (Ex. xiv. 4, 17, 18, cp. Rom. iv. 17). The expressions used here are those we have met with in other prophecies (e.g. cp. *vv.* 21, 22 with vi. 2, 7, xiii. 8, xx. 41). Zidon is threatened with pestilence as well as with slaughter. We know nothing from history of what happened to it, after the fall of Jerusalem, but about 230 years later (351 B.C.) the city was destroyed by Alexander Ochus. The translation of the text is to be preferred to that of the margin in *v.* 23. Zidon had been from its contiguity to Israel a pricking brier and a grieving thorn: cp. Numb. xxxiii. 55 'then shall those which ye let remain of them be as pricks in your eyes, and as thorns in your sides' (so Josh. xxiii. 13). We are reminded by the second simile of St Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' (2 Cor. xii. 7). The Greek word for 'thorn' used in this last passage is used for the Hebrew word translated 'brier' in the present verse. For the expression 'did despite unto them,' cp. xvi. 57, and for the final words of both *v.* 23 and *v.* 24 cp. vi. 7.

25, 26. The last two verses of this chapter are connected with the previous ones by the mention of the house of Israel in *v.* 24. There is to be a re-collection of the Israelites into their own land (see passages quoted on xi. 17). God is sanctified alike in His judgement upon Zidon and in mercy toward Israel (cp. *v.* 25 with *v.* 22). The promise that Israel

26 which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell securely therein; yea, they shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and shall dwell securely; when I have executed judgements upon all those that do them despite round about them; and they shall know that I am the LORD their God.

$G^{1,2}$. A SERIES OF PROPHECIES AGAINST EGYPT, INTERRUPTED BY THE MISPLACED INSERTION OF xxix. 17–21, WHICH OUGHT TO COME AFTER xxviii. 19, 587 B.C. G^1 CHAPTER XXIX. 1–16.

These prophecies are dated earlier than xxvi.–xxviii. and are attributed to a time seven months anterior to the fall of Jerusalem.

xlvii. *A prophecy against Egypt and its king.* xxix. 1–16.

XXIX. 1 In the tenth year, in the tenth *month*, in the twelfth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came 2 unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against 3 all Egypt: speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD:

should again dwell in his own land is repeated twice (xxxvi. 28: xxxvii. 25). The mention of Jacob instead of Abraham here and in xxxvii. 25 is unusual. Jeremiah speaks of Jacob's tents (xxx. 18) in one place in much the same way.

XXIX. 2–7. AGAINST EGYPT. The Pharaoh of this prophecy is Pharaoh Hophra mentioned under that name by Jeremiah (xliv. 30), but elsewhere simply called Pharaoh. He was the grandson of Pharaoh Necho (2 K. xxiii. 29) and reigned, according to the best authorities, nineteen years (588–569 B.C.). It has been questioned whether Egypt ever was conquered by Nebuchadrezzar, as both Jeremiah (xlvi. 13–26) and Ezekiel foretold; there does not exist any definite record of what is in itself inherently probable. The 'burden of Egypt' (Is. xix.) should be compared with these later prophecies. The desolation of Egypt is also announced by Joel (iii. 19). Here and in xxxii. 2 the king of Egypt is compared to the great dragon, a mythological monster, perhaps identical with the Babylonian Tiamat, but conceived of in the language of these two prophecies as something like a huge crocodile (cp. Ps. lxxiv. 13: Is. xxvii. 1: li. 9). The declaration of *v.* 3 is made a charge against Pharaoh in *v.* 9.

Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for
4 myself. And I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales; and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, with all the fish of thy rivers which stick unto thy scales.
5 And I will leave thee *thrown* into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the [1]open field; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered: I have given thee for meat to the beasts of
6 the earth and to the fowls of the heaven. And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD,

[1] Heb. *face of the field.*

The 'rivers' may be the different streams of the delta of *the* 'river,' i.e. the Nile. For the 'hooks' we may compare xxxviii. 4: 2 K. xix. 28: 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11 (R.V. *marg.*): so too Job xli. 1 'Canst thou draw out leviathan (*marg.* 'that is, the crocodile') with a hook?' Why the fish of the river are described as sticking to the scales of the dragon is not clear, unless it means that all the king's retinue and hangers-on of the court were to share in the king's fall. As a matter of fact the end of Hophra's reign was caused by the occurrence of a revolt of mercenaries in the far South of Egypt which might well be called 'the wilderness' and 'the open field' (for this latter expression cp. Jer. ix. 22). The prophet also implies that he would not have the rites of royal burial accorded to him: 'thou shalt not be...gathered' has its parallel in Jer. viii. 2 and perhaps Job xxvii. 19. The folly of the kings of Judah in having looked to Egypt for help is asserted by Egypt being called 'a staff of reed' (cp. 2 K. xviii. 21: 'thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust in him' || Is. xxxvi. 6: and so Is. xxx. 2, 3, 7). But not only so, the effect upon Egypt had also been disastrous. The union between the two and their support of one another only brought further trouble to Israel: cp. Is. xxx. 3 'Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.' The R.V. *marg.* (*v.* 7) 'by the handle' gives no good sense. 'Thou didst break' should rather be 'thou wast broken,' the word used is the same as in the expression 'this bruised reed' which is used of Egypt (2 K. xviii. 21: see above). If the Hebrew reading is right, the jagged edge of the broken staff is represented as tearing open the shoulder of Israel with a grievous

because they have been a staff of reed to the house of
7 Israel. When they took hold of thee [1]by thy hand, thou
didst break, and didst rend all their shoulders: and when
they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their
8 loins to [2]be at a stand. Therefore thus saith the Lord
GOD: Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and will cut
9 off from thee man and beast. And the land of Egypt
shall be a desolation and a waste; and they shall know
that I am the LORD: because he hath said, The river is
10 mine, and I have made it. Therefore behold, I am

[1] Or, *by the handle* Another reading is, *with the hand.*
[2] Or, as some read, *shake* See Ps. 69. 23.

wound: but the Greek version encourages us to read 'hand' for 'shoulder' and the language then corresponds with that of 2 K. xviii. 21. The sense of the last expression in *v.* 7 is improved if two of the letters in the word representing 'madest...to be at a stand' are reversed: the meaning is then that given in R.V. *marg.* 'madest...to shake': so Ps. lxix. 33 'make their loins continually to shake.'

8–12. The declaration against Pharaoh and Egypt is reiterated, and its desolation prophesied, in order that it might know the power of Jehovah (cp. *v.* 7). Pharaoh had boasted that the Nile was his and of his making (cp. *v.* 3). Jehovah would shew his power over the rivers: the plural is used for the various streams of the delta of the Nile (cp. xxx. 12): and He would make the land a desolation. Its desolation was to reach from Migdol to Syene (R.V. *margin* is the better translation), and even to the border of Cush. Migdol and Syene occur in the same way in xxx. 6. Migdol is the northern limit of desolation: it is questionable whether it is the same Migdol as that in Ex. xiv. 2: Numb. xxxiii. 7: the word simply means a tower: hence the rendering of R.V. which comes from the Vulgate. There is a Bir Maktal in the desert to the north-east of the Bitter Lakes at the present day: but no doubt there was more than one frontier tower and settlement bearing this name. There seems to have been a place so called twelve Roman miles south of Pelusium (*Itinerarium Antonini* quoted in *Encycl. Bib.* 3083) and this may have been the place. Migdol was one of the places in which the Jews settled (Jer. xliv. 1: xlvi. 14). Syene (xxx. 6, perhaps also in xxx. 16 but Heb. Sin as in xxx. 15, and in Is. xliii. 3 Heb. Seba) is the modern Assouân opposite the city and Island of Elephantiné seven degrees south of Pelusium, and was in ancient days a border city. Some would identify the Sinim of Is. xlix. 12 with this place. Aramaic papyri of about a century later than this prophecy have lately been discovered there; they have been edited by

against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, [1]from the tower of Seveneh even unto the border of Ethiopia.
11 No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty
12 years. And I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be a desolation forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the
13 countries. For thus saith the Lord GOD: At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the peoples
14 whither they were scattered: and I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their [2]birth; and
15 they shall be there a [3]base kingdom. It shall be the

[1] Or, *from Migdol to Syene and even &c.* [2] Or, *origin* [3] Heb. *low.*

Sayce and Cowley (A. Moring, 1906). Cush began to the south of Philae, a little to the south of Syene. In *v.* 11 a very sweeping statement is made: the words mean that for that period Egypt would lose its importance. It may be that we are not to define the 'forty years' exactly, but it is noticeable that the first occupation by the Persians which began under Cambyses lasted close upon forty years (525–487 B.C.); and many cruelties, from which the Egyptians suffered, are attributed to him by Herodotus. With *v.* 12 cp. xxx. 7, 23, 26. History does not reveal to us any such dispersion as is here threatened. It is to be noticed that neither the name of the conqueror of Egypt nor that of his nation is mentioned in the prophecy.

13–16. A restoration from captivity is promised to Egypt (cp. Is. xix. 22, 23: Jer. xlvi. 26). In *v.* 14 Egypt is called 'the land of Pathros' (cp. xxx. 14: Jer. xliv. 1, 14: Is. xi. 11: in this last passage the Greek has Babylonia). The common interpretation of Pathros is that it means Upper, i.e. southern Egypt: cp. Pathrusim (Gen. xi. 14) begotten from Mizraim, i.e. Egypt. Upper Egypt was held by ancient historians (Hdt. ii. 4, 15: Diod. Sic. i. 50) to be the original home of the Egyptians, and Menes the first king of the first dynasty is said to have come from This near Abydos in Upper Egypt. Hence the land of Pathros, i.e. Upper Egypt, is called 'the land of their origin' (R.V. *marg. v.* 14). Cheyne looks to N. Arabia and Jerahmeel for a solution of the difficulties of the names involved. The word 'base' used of a kingdom occurs in reference to Jerusalem in xvii. 14. As a matter of fact though the Egyptians held

basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it any more lift itself up above the nations: and I will diminish them,
16 that they shall no more rule over the nations. And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing iniquity to remembrance, when they turn to look after them: and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

H. A PROPHECY OF MUCH LATER DATE (570 B.C.) BUT INSERTED HERE BECAUSE OF ITS CONNECTION WITH THE FALL OF THE EGYPTIAN KINGDOM. CHAPTER XXIX. 17–21.

xlviii. *A prophecy in which is indicated how little profit Nebuchadrezzar had from his long siege of Tyre: but it is announced that Egypt shall fall to him as a compensation.* xxix. 17–21.

17 And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year,
in the first *month*, in the first *day* of the month, the
18 word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man,

out for a short time after 487 B.C., Egypt never again regained its power and independence, and so the prophecy of *v.* 15 (cp. xxx. 13: Zech. x. 11) was fulfilled. One consequence of this was that the Jewish people could no more, however much some of their statesmen might have done so in time past (cp. Is. xxx. 2, 3: xxxvi. 6), look to Egypt to support them in their resistance to Babylon. The usual refrain concludes this prophecy (see vi. 7): it may refer here either to Israel or to the Egyptians.

17–20. Prophecies concerning Tyre were uttered by the prophet sixteen years before the present one (xxvi. 1—xxviii. 19) and this is the sequel to those. The siege of Tyre is said to have lasted thirteen years, and no definite result came of it. It caused much hardship among the besiegers. The Hebrew words translated 'made bald' and 'peeled,' i.e. laid bare (cp. Is. xviii. 2, R.V. *marg.*), are vague: the new *Oxf. Heb. Lex.* interprets them as describing the result of much carrying of burdens. Keil holds that the burdens referred to were those that had to be borne in order to fill up the space between the island Tyre and the mainland. Nebuchadrezzar was to have his consolation in Egypt which was to be given to him (so xxx. 10–12, 24,

Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyre: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, from Tyre, for the service that he
19 had served against it: therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall carry off her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey; and
20 it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt [1]as his recompence for which he served, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord GOD.
21 In that day will I cause an horn to bud forth unto the house of Israel, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

[1] Or, for *his labour wherewith he served*

25: xxxii. 11). Jeremiah prophesied in a similar way against Egypt (xlvi. 13–28). There was to be a deportation of some of her inhabitants (cp. xxx. 4: but the Greek version omits the deportation) and she was to be spoiled (cp. xxxii. 12). In this way would the long military services of the Babylonian army be rewarded. Their work *had* been for God, and God would reward them.

21. In the concluding verse the prophet seems to have looked forward to some advantage accruing to Israel as the result of this subjugation of Egypt: but his words are very indefinite. The horn is of course an emblem of power. With that advantage, whatever it might be, was to come a further opportunity for the prophet (cp. xxiv. 27: xxxiii. 22). The usual refrain concludes the prophecy (vi. 7).

G². FURTHER PROPHECIES AGAINST EGYPT FOLLOWING UPON AND CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH xxix. 1–16. AS THEY PROCEED, THE PROPHET BECOMES MORE DEFINITE, TILL AT LENGTH (*v.* 10) HE MENTIONS NEBUCHADREZZAR BY NAME. CHAPTER XXX. 1–19.

xlix. *An utterance shewing that the devastation was to extend far and wide.* xxx. 1–5.

XXX. 1 The word of the LORD came again unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the
3 Lord GOD: Howl ye, Woe worth the day! For the day is
near, even the day of the LORD is near, a day of clouds;
4 it shall be the time of the heathen. And a sword shall
come upon Egypt, and anguish shall be in [1]Ethiopia,
when the slain shall fall in Egypt; and they shall take
away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken
5 down. [1]Ethiopia, and Put, and Lud, and all the mingled

[1] Heb. *Cush.*

XXX. 1–5. The expression 'Woe worth the day' of both A.V. and R.V. is an archaic one, the word 'worth' coming from the Anglo-Saxon and meaning 'be' or 'become.' So it means Woe be to the day. We may recall the words

> Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day
> That costs thy life, my gallant grey.
> SCOTT, *Lady of the Lake*, i. 9.

We here meet with the expression 'the day of the Lord,' always implying judgement, and sometimes spoken of simply as '*the* day' (vii. 7, 12: cp. Joel i. 15: ii. 1: Ob. 15: Zeph. i. 7: cp. Introd. p. xxxvi.). The day of clouds recurs later (xxxiv. 12). The invasion is to be widespread and to extend beyond the Egyptian borders into Ethiopia, Put and Lud (see xxvii. 10 for these two names). 'The mingled people' occur here and in Jeremiah (xxv. 20) in rather a different sense from that in which the expression is used elsewhere, unless it represents mercenary Egyptian forces. The rendering is as old as the LXX but it is tempting to think that the Massoretic pointing is wrong, and that the real meaning is 'all the Arabians.' 'Cub' must be taken as a corrupt reading for Lub, i.e. Libya: the LXX has Libyans. 'The children of the land of the covenant' is another obscure expression like 'the mingled people.' Some have held

people, and Cub, and the children of [1]the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

1. *A further declaration against Egypt and her helpers.* XXX. 6–9.

6 Thus saith the LORD: They also that uphold Egypt
shall fall, and the pride of her power shall come down:
[2]from the tower of Seveneh shall they fall in it by the
7 sword, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall be desolate in
the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her
cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.
8 And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have set
9 a fire in Egypt, and all her helpers are [3]destroyed. In
that day shall messengers go forth from before me in
ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid; and there
shall be anguish upon them, as in the day of Egypt; for,
lo, it cometh.

[1] Or, *the land of the covenant* [2] Or, *from Migdol to Syene*
[3] Heb. *broken.*

that it refers to Israelite refugees in Egypt: Jerome takes it of the Jewish people. It must, however, mean some allied African nation.

6–9. The declaration of these verses forms a kind of antistrophe to the previous announcement. Very little fresh information is given: in great part what is said is a repetition of xxix. 8–12. The upholders of Egypt must be her allies and tributaries. 'The pride of her power' is an expression which occurs again in *v.* 28 and xxxiii. 28, in the latter case referring to Israel. For 'the tower of Seveneh' see note on xxix. 10. Ambassadors in ships (*v.* 9) in connection with Ethiopia occur in Isaiah (xviii. 1, 2) where they are said to be sent from 'the land of the rustling of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,' and they are said to travel 'in vessels of papyrus upon the waters.' The messengers are generally supposed to mean refugees from Egypt used by Jehovah as His ambassadors. 'The day of Egypt' may either mean the present judgement of Egypt, or may refer to the judgement upon that country at the time of the Exodus.

li. *A further Divine declaration. At this point the prophet introduces for the first time the name of the instrument used by Jehovah to carry out His punishment of Egypt. It is to be Nebuchadrezzar.* XXX. 10–12.

10 Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will also make the
multitude of Egypt to cease, by the hand of Nebuchad-
11 rezzar king of Babylon. He and his people with him,
the terrible of the nations, shall be brought in to
destroy the land; and they shall draw their swords
12 against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain. And I will
make the rivers dry, and will sell the land into the hand
of evil men; and I will make the land desolate, and [1]all
that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the LORD have
spoken it.

lii. *Another declaration of Jehovah, entering into details as to the judgements of particular places.* XXX. 13–19.

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will also destroy the idols,
and I will cause the [2]images to cease from Noph; and
there shall be no more a prince out of the land of Egypt:

[1] Heb. *the fulness thereof.* [2] Or, *things of nought* See Ps. 96. 5.

10–12. This prophecy is earlier than xxix. 17–21 (see heading to that prophecy) but here as there we have the 'multitude' of Egypt spoken of (cp. *v.* 4). 'The terrible of the nations,' as applied to the Babylonians, occurs first in xxviii. 7 in a prophecy against the prince of Tyre. Isaiah (xix. 5, 6) also speaks of the drying up of the Rivers of Egypt. The 'evil men' of Ezekiel correspond to the 'cruel lord' and 'fierce king' of Isaiah (xix. 4). The solemn declaration at the end of this prophecy occurs first in xvii. 21.

13–19. The Septuagint omits all mention of the 'idols' or 'images' (*marg.* 'things of nought') of the Hebrew. The gods of Egypt and their temples are also doomed to destruction by Jeremiah (xliii. 12 'I will kindle a fire in the house of the gods of Egypt,' xlvi. 25). Isaiah had already said 'the idols of Egypt shall be moved at' Jehovah's 'presence' (xix. 1): and we may compare the declaration of Ex. xii. 12 'against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements' (cp. Numb. xxxiii. 4). The word translated

14 and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. And I will
make Pathros desolate, and will set a fire in Zoan, and will
15 execute judgements in No. And I will pour my fury
upon Sin, the strong hold of Egypt; and I will cut off
16 the multitude of No. And I will set a fire in Egypt; Sin

'images' etymologically signifies what is worthless. So in Ps. xcvi. 5 (R.V. *marg.*) we have 'all the gods of the peoples are idols,' i.e. worthless gods. Noph (*vv.* 13, 16: cp. Is. xix. 13: Jer. ii. 16: xliv. 1 [a colony of Jews there]: xlvi. 14, 19) was the famous ancient city more commonly known as Memphis (cp. Hos. ix. 6 where the Hebrew form is Moph) about 10 miles south of the Cairo of to-day which is partly built of stone quarried from its ruins. It claimed to have been founded by Menes and was the seat of the worship of the god Ptah with whose name the name Egypt is generally connected. The three great pyramids and the famous sphinx are close to the site of this city. The panic in the land described in *v.* 13 is in a similar passage in Isaiah (xix. 16) ascribed to 'the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shaketh over it.' The previous words imply not so much that there was to be no prince in Egypt, as that his power was not to extend outside that country. For Pathros see xxix. 14. Zoan (*v.* 15) or Tanis (one of the branches of the Nile was called Tanitic) was another very ancient city which certainly existed during the sixth dynasty of Egyptian kings. It is said of Hebron (Numb. xiii. 22), in order to vouch for its antiquity, that it 'was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.' The writer of Ps. lxxviii. 12, 43 records the wonders that were worked 'in the field of Zoan': and Isaiah (xix. 11, 13: xxx. 4) speaks of 'the princes of Zoan' as if it were a royal residence. Almost exactly one hundred years before Ezekiel's prophecy Zoan had been sacked by the Assyrians as a punishment for having joined Tirhakah king of Ethiopia who was the third king belonging to the Ethiopian dynasty which ruled over Egypt and is generally called the twenty-fifth dynasty. No (*vv.* 14, 15, 16) or No-amon (Nah. iii. 8), or Amon of No (Jer. xlvi. 25), is called Diospolis by the Septuagint in Ezekiel and thus identified with the Thebes of Upper Egypt which was the seat of the worship of Amon or Ammon. It began to be an important place during the eleventh dynasty, and the ruinous temples and palaces of Luxor and Karnak on its site are notable to-day. It will be remembered that Homer speaks of Thebes with its hundred gates (*Il.* IX. 383). Sin (*vv.* 15, 16) is a doubtful name; it is called 'the strong hold of Egypt.' Following the Vulgate the margin of the A.V. identified the place with Pelusium to the east of the seventh or Pelusiac mouth of the Nile. If this identification were true, this would make Sin one of the border fortresses of Egypt on the east and therefore a 'strong hold.' The various texts of the Septuagint are not in agreement.

shall be in great anguish, and No shall be broken up: and
17 Noph *shall have* adversaries [1]in the day-time. The young
men of Aven and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword:
18 and these *cities* shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes
also the day shall [2]withdraw itself, when I shall break
there the yokes of Egypt, and the pride of her power
shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her,
19 and her daughters shall go into captivity. Thus will I
execute judgements in Egypt: and they shall know that
I am the LORD.

[1] Or, *all the day* [2] Another reading is, *be dark.*

In *v.* 15 they vary between Sais and Tanis, i.e. Zoan; in *v.* 16 they mostly read Syene, but one important MS. has Sais. If Sais is right the town was one to the west: the name survives in the Port Said of to-day. If Syene is right then we have met with the place in xxix. 10 as a border garrison town in the extreme south. The old identification with Pelusium or with some site in that neighbourhood seems however the best one. The expression 'adversaries in the day-time (*marg.* all the day)' reads feebly: the Septuagint has a different reading: 'waters shall be dispersed': probably the text is corrupt: and we have no means of knowing exactly what the prophet said or wrote.

The name Aven (*v.* 17) is due to a mistake in the Hebrew vocalization: it should be On, which is identical with Heliopolis, the great seat of the worship of the sun-god, a few miles to the north-east of Cairo. It was the home of Poti-phera, Joseph's father-in-law (Gen. xli. 45) and is almost certainly alluded to under the name Beth-shemesh (i.e. house of the sun) in Jer. xliii. 13 (see R.V. *marg.*) and also in Is. xix. 18 (see R.V. *marg.*). Pi-beseth or Bubastis (*v.* 17), still called Tel Basta, was another very ancient city devoted to the worship of the cat: it had near it a large cemetery for cats: it was the capital of a nome or district of Egypt. Finally, Tehaphnehes (*v.* 18) or Tahpanhes (Jer. ii. 16: xliii. 7–9 [the temporary residence of Jeremiah, with a royal palace]: xliv. 1: xlvi. 14: Judith i. 9) is by some identified with the Hanes of Is. xxx. 4. It must have been the chief town of a district, for the expression 'her daughters' means the neighbouring villages (cp. Josh. xv. 45 R.V. *marg.*). It was one of the places in which the Jewish exiles settled. It is called Taphnas in the Septuagint, and is identified with the Daphnae near Pelusium in the N.E. of Egypt of Herodotus (II. 30). S.W. of the remains of Pelusium is to be found another site still called Tel Defenneh, which may reasonably be identified with Tahpanhes. Yet again 'they shall know that I am the Lord' (see vi. 7).

I. ANOTHER PROPHECY CONCERNING EGYPT, ABOUT THREE MONTHS LATER THAN THE LAST SERIES. Chapter XXX. 20–26.

liii. *This prophecy, in point of date, stands alone, and exhibits Nebuchadrezzar as Jehovah's agent in the humiliation of Egypt, and the carrying out of the Divine punishment.* xxx. 20–26.

The year of this prophecy is 586 B.C.

20 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first
month, in the seventh *day* of the month, that the word
21 of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, I have
broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, lo, it
hath not been bound up to apply *healing* medicines, to
put a roller to bind it, that it be strong to hold the sword.
22 Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against
Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the
strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause the
23 sword to fall out of his hand. And I will scatter the
Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them
24 through the countries. And I will strengthen the arms
of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand:
but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he shall groan
before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded
25 man. And I will hold up the arms of the king of Babylon,
and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and they shall
know that I am the Lord, when I shall put my sword into
the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it
26 out upon the land of Egypt. And I will scatter the

20–26. The word translated 'roller' is a surgical one: the Septuagint thinks rather of a poultice. The roller of modern use is a long broad bandage. By the breaking of his arms the Pharaoh was prevented from wielding any weapon of war. Driver considers that this is an allusion to "the recent failure of the Egyptian army to relieve Jerusalem" (*O. T. Lit.* p. 271). The dispersion of the Egyptians (*vv.* 23, 26) is again prophesied (cp. xxix. 12), as well as the display of Babylon's

Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them through the countries ; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

J. A PROPHECY AGAINST EGYPT UTTERED A FEW WEEKS BEFORE THE FINAL DISASTER TO JERUSALEM. CHAPTER XXXI. 1–18.

liv. *This prophecy though divided by the R.V. into paragraphs really forms only one prophecy and describes the magnificence of Egypt and its correspondingly deep fall.* XXXI. 1–18.

The date of this prophecy is 586 B.C.

XXXI. 1 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third *month*, in the first *day* of the month, that 2 the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude ; 3 Whom art thou like in thy greatness? Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature ; and 4 his top was among the [1]thick boughs. The waters nourished him, the deep made him to grow: her rivers ran round about her plantation ; and she sent out her

[1] Or, *clouds*

power. The Pharaoh alluded to here is Pharaoh Hophra (cp. Jer. xxxvii. 5, 7).

XXXI. 1–9. The abundant population of the Egyptian empire seems to have struck the prophet's imagination (cp. *v.* 2 with xxix. 19 : xxx. 4 : xxxii. 12, 16, 20, 31, 32). The question of *v.* 2 recurs in *v.* 18 in a fuller form (cp. xxxii. 19). The mention of the Assyrian comes in rather strangely : by the addition of a letter to the Hebrew text we have the name of a tree (*teashshûr*) already mentioned in xxvii. 6 (R.V. 'boxwood' : so Is. xli. 19 : lx. 13) which is thought by many to be a kind of cedar called *sherbîn*. This seems extremely probable as the *sherbîn* grew in Lebanon : and the whole language then becomes parabolical. The two names given to one tree are used to intensify its grandeur : 'Behold there was a magnificent cedar in Lebanon.' The 'shroud' of a tree is its foliage, that which

5 channels unto all the trees of the field. Therefore his
stature was exalted above all the trees of the field; and
his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became
long by reason of [1]many waters, when he shot *them* forth.
6 All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and
under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring
forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great
7 nations. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length
8 of his branches: for his root was by [1]many waters. The
cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir
trees were not like his boughs, and the plane trees were
not as his branches; nor was any tree in the garden of
9 God like unto him in his beauty. I made him fair by the
multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden,
that were in the garden of God, envied him.
10 Therefore thus [2]said the Lord GOD: Because thou art
exalted in stature, and he hath set his top among the
11 [3]thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height; I
will even deliver him into the hand of the mighty one of
the nations; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven

[1] Or, *great* [2] Or, *saith* [3] Or, *clouds*

covers it. The rendering of R.V. 'among the thick boughs' is chosen to agree with the 'thick tree' of xx. 28 (cp. vi. 13), but here and in *vv.* 10, 14 the rendering of R.V. *margin* 'among the clouds' is to be preferred and has the support of the Septuagint. For the comparison of a king to a great tree cp. Dan. iv. 10–16: 20–23, and for many of the expressions used here cp. c. xvii. In *vv.* 8, 16, 18 the prophet draws comparisons with the garden of Eden about which he had already spoken in xxviii. 13, if that prophecy precedes this in point of time.

10–14. After making his comparison the prophet continues the simile and indicates the punishment which is to come as one for pride. The language becomes more mixed between the simile and the thing signified. 'His heart is lifted up' must refer to Pharaoh not to the tree: the expression is used in the same way of Nebuchadrezzar (Dan. v. 20) who had previously been compared to a tree. Nebuchadrezzar and the Chaldaean hosts are indicated in no obscure language: they had been spoken of as 'strangers,' 'the terrible of the nations' in the prophecy against the prince of Tyre (xxviii. 7: cp. xxx. 11, 12: xxxii. 12). The interpretation of the second clause of *v.* 12 is to be found in xxxii. 5, 6

12 him out for his wickedness. And strangers, the terrible
of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: upon
the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are
fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the watercourses
of the land; and all the peoples of the earth are gone
13 down from his shadow, and have left him. Upon his ruin
all the fowls of the heaven shall dwell, and all the beasts
14 of the field shall be upon his branches: to the end that
none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves in
their stature, neither set their top among the thick
boughs, nor that their mighty ones stand up in their
height, *even* all that drink water: for they are all
delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in
the midst of the children of men, with them that go
down to the pit.
15 Thus saith the Lord GOD: In the day when he went
down to [1]hell I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for
him, and I restrained the rivers thereof, and the great
waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon [2]to mourn for
16 him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. I made
the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast
him down to [1]hell with them that descend into the pit:
and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon,
all that drink water, were comforted in the nether parts
17 of the earth. They also went down into [1]hell with him

[1] Heb. *Sheol.* [2] Heb. *to be black.*

'I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height...and the watercourses shall be full of thee' (see note there). With the third clause cp. Dan. iv. 14: 'let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches.' This destruction is set forth as a warning to other trees, i.e. to other nations, as to what was sure to come upon them. The 'nether parts of the earth' have been already mentioned as well as those 'that go down to the pit' (xxvi. 20).

15–17. In these verses the prophet uses language as if the destruction was already over, reverting to the threat of future doom in *v.* 18. In *v.* 15 the word for 'I covered' is by many held to be superfluous—it gives no very good sense and is omitted by the Septuagint. The sense of the passage then is 'I caused the deep to mourn for him,'

unto them that be slain by the sword; yea, they that were his arm, *that* dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the nations.

18 To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

K. AFTER A CONSIDERABLE INTERVAL THE PROPHET TAKES UP HIS BURDEN AGAIN AGAINST EGYPT. CHAPTER XXXII. 1–16.

The date of this prophecy is 585 B.C. The prophecies against Egypt cover parts of three years. In consequence of the length of the interval separating this prophecy from the preceding one Toy alters the date from the twelfth year to the eleventh.

lv. *The desolation and spoiling of Egypt and its king by Nebuchadrezzar is distinctly foretold in this prophecy which forms one utterance by itself.* xxxii. 1–16.

XXXII. 1 And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first *day* of the month, that 2 the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man,

and is exactly parallel with the later words 'I caused Lebanon to mourn for him.' The comforting of the trees is explained in xxxii. 31 as the comforting of Pharaoh and, we must suppose, his officers, but it is not at all clear in what the comforting consists. It may be in the fact that one so great is associated with others in their fall. There is a connection in *v.* 17 also with what was said about Pharaoh's arm being broken in xxx. 21.

18. The question of *v.* 2 is taken up again. His condemnation is that he is to be reckoned amongst the uncircumcised, that is, as an outcast (cp. xxxii. 19, 28).

XXXII. 2. The following prophecy like some of the previous ones (see xix. 1) is called a lamentation. The Pharaoh is Hophra. The comparison with lions is a favourite one with Ezekiel (xix. 3, 5, 6: xxxviii. 13); that with a dragon is limited to Egypt (see xxix. 3) and implies a lower

take up a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thou wast likened unto a young lion of the nations: yet art thou as a dragon in the seas; and thou brakest forth [1]with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters
3 with thy feet, and fouledst their rivers. Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will spread out my net over thee with a company of many peoples; and they shall bring thee up
4 in my net. And I will leave thee upon the land, I will cast thee forth upon the open field, and will cause all the fowls of the heaven to settle upon thee, and I will satisfy
5 the beasts of the whole earth with thee. And I will lay thy flesh upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy
6 [2]height. I will also water with thy blood the land wherein thou swimmest, even to the mountains; and the water-
7 courses shall be full of thee. And when I shall extinguish thee, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof [3]dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon
8 shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make [3]dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy

[1] Or, *in* [2] Or, as otherwise read, *worms* [3] Or, *to mourn*

estimate of Pharaoh. The breaking forth of the rivers must refer to the inundation of the Nile, and the trampling with the feet to one of the processes of agriculture in the flood-sodden lands as well as to the effect produced by the crocodile in the waters.

3–10. A further stage in the prophecy. The mixed character of the invading army is announced as in the case of Tyre (xxvi. 3). The Egyptians are compared to animals in a snare, or, it may be, to the fish of their rivers caught in a net (cp. xxix. 5), and spread out upon the land. In our own day and land a superabundance of fish is often treated in this way. The beasts to be satisfied are the ravaging Babylonian armies. The ordinary impression of Egypt as a level plain is true of the Delta, but above Cairo the valley of the Nile is bounded by cliffs and hills if not by 'mountains' and it should be remembered that the Egyptian world includes the mountainous Arabian peninsula. The question in *v.* 5 between 'height' (R.V.) and 'worms' (R.V. *marg.*) is one of Hebrew vocalization. The Greek reads differently 'with thy blood': and this seems the simplest meaning for the passage: the main difficulty about it is that then the beginning of the next verse is a repetition of the same idea. The words 'wherein thou swimmest' (both A.V. and R.V.) strike a rather discordant note: the

9 land, saith the Lord GOD. I will also vex the hearts of
many peoples, when I shall bring thy destruction among
the nations, into the countries which thou hast not known.
10 Yea, I will make many peoples amazed at thee, and their
kings shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall
brandish my sword before them; and they shall tremble
at every moment, every man for his own life, in the day of
11 thy fall. For thus saith the Lord GOD: The sword of the
12 king of Babylon shall come upon thee. By the swords
of the mighty will I cause thy multitude to fall; the
terrible of the nations are they all: and they shall spoil
the pride of Egypt, and all the multitude thereof shall be
13 destroyed. I will destroy also all the beasts thereof from
beside [1]many waters; neither shall the foot of man
trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of beasts trouble
14 them. Then will I [2]make their waters clear, and cause
15 their rivers to run like oil, saith the Lord GOD. When I
shall make the land of Egypt desolate and waste, a land

[1] Or, *great* [2] Heb. *cause their waters to settle.*

interpretation usually adopted now is the land of 'thine overflow,' i.e. of blood, but this is also rather awkward. In *v.* 7 the metaphor changes. Egypt is to be extinguished and left in darkness (cp. Is. xiii. 10: Joel ii. 31: and Matt. xxiv. 29: Mk xiii. 24, 25 where the language seems a recollection of that used here). Her destruction will make other nations alarmed and dismayed lest a similar or even worse judgement should be in store for them. The effect is like that produced by the judgement of Tyre (xxvii. 35: cp. xxvi. 16). The last words of *v.* 10 recall Deut. xxviii. 66 'thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.'

11–16. The climax arrives in the announcement of the coming of Nebuchadrezzar (cp. xxix. 19: xxx. 10: Jer. xlvi. 26). For the 'multitude' of Egypt see xxx. 4; for 'the terrible of the nations' xxviii. 7. There is a trace of Oriental hyperbole here in *v.* 13 as in xxix. 11: the devastation of the land never actually became so great as is depicted here, where it is represented as causing the river to run clear and bright instead of being fouled by the agricultural operations in the country (see on *v.* 2). The lamentation concludes with the usual refrain (see vi. 7), perhaps here a recollection of what was said in preparation for the coming of the plagues upon Egypt (Ex. vii. 5 'the Egyptians shall know that I

destitute of [1]that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein, then shall they know that I
16 am the LORD. This is the lamentation wherewith they shall lament; the daughters of the nations shall lament therewith: for Egypt, and for all her multitude, shall they lament therewith, saith the Lord GOD.

L. PROPHECIES CLASSED UNDER THE DATE OF xxxii. 17 OF VARIOUS CHARACTER; ONE A SECOND LAMENTATION OVER EGYPT, AND TWO DEFINING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROPHETIC PREACHER AND THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH MAN FOR HIS SINS. CHAPTERS XXXII. 17–XXXIII. 20.

The date (585 B.C.) is apparently a fortnight later than the last prophecy, though the number of the month is not given.

lvi. *A further lamentation over Egypt, with a description of the companions which the Egyptians will find in Sheol.* xxxii. 17–32.

17 It came to pass also in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth *day* of the month, that the word of the LORD
18 came unto me, saying, Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt, and cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with them that go down into the pit.

[1] Heb. *the fulness thereof.*

am the Lord'). 'The daughters of the nations' are to lament for Egypt's fall, just as it is indicated later (*v.* 18) that they will share in it. The lamentation is to be an unusual one, for mourners were a professional class (cp. Jer. ix. 17).

17–21. The mention of 'the multitude of Egypt' forms a connecting link with the previous prophecy (see xxxii. 16 and cp. xxxi. 2), and, though the number of the month is not mentioned here, it is evident that the twelfth month is intended (cp. *v.* 1), and that this prophecy was uttered a fortnight after the last. It is noticeable that the casting down of Egypt into the nether parts

19 Whom dost thou pass in beauty? go down, and be thou
20 laid with the uncircumcised. They shall fall in the midst
of them that are slain by the sword: [1]she is delivered to
21 the sword: draw her away and all her multitudes. The
strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the
midst of [2]hell with them that help him: they are gone
down, they lie still, even the uncircumcised, slain by the
22 sword. Asshur is there and all her company; his graves
are round about him: all of them slain, fallen by the
23 sword: whose graves are set in the uttermost parts of the
pit, and her company is round about her grave: all of
them slain, fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the
24 land of the living. There is Elam and all her multitude
round about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the
sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether
parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land

[1] Or, *the sword is appointed* [2] Heb. *Sheol.*

of the earth (cp. xxxi. 14) is assigned to the prophet as the carrier out of God's vengeance. 'The pit' and 'hell' or Sheol in these verses represent respectively the grave and the dwelling-place of the departed. The word 'pass' in the phrase 'pass in beauty' is an archaic use of the word instead of 'surpass' (cp. 2 Sam. i. 26). By 'the daughters of the famous nations' are meant the peoples tributary to the great world-power. The question asked in *v.* 19 corresponds to those in xxxi. 2, 18. 'The uncircumcised' who constantly occur in this prophecy are the outcasts and uncivilised. *V.* 20 reads like a series of hysterical ejaculations about Egypt. This is indicated by the frequent change of persons and genders in this and the following verse. The person addressed by the strong ones (*v.* 21) must be the king of Egypt who has been preceded thither by his allies who have been already mentioned (xxx. 6, 8).

22, 23. Individual nations inhabiting Hades are now mentioned. Asshur has the first place: the Assyrian Empire practically came to an end about the end of the seventh century B.C. Asshur is located in 'the uttermost parts of the pit' just as it is said of the king of Babylon by Isaiah (xiv. 15): 'thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the uttermost parts of the pit.'

24, 25. Elam follows, whose fall was prophesied by Jeremiah at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign (xlix. 34–39). Elam was a constant source of trouble to one empire after another, especially to the Assyrians. We meet with a king of Elam amongst the kings of Gen. xiv. 1. Some forty years before Zedekiah's reign Elam had been subdued by the Assyrians under

of the living, and have borne their shame with them that
25 go down to the pit. They have set her a bed in the
midst of the slain with all her multitude; her graves are
round about her: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the
sword; for their terror was caused in the land of the
living, and they have borne their shame with them that go
down to the pit: he is put in the midst of them that be
26 slain. There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude;
her graves are round about her: all of them uncircum-
cised, slain by the sword; for they caused their terror in
27 the land of the living. [1]And they shall not lie with the
mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are
gone down to [2]hell with their weapons of war, and have
laid their swords under their heads, and their iniquities
are upon their bones; for *they were* the terror of the
28 mighty in the land of the living. But thou shalt be
broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and shalt lie

[1] Or, *And shall they not lie &c.?* [2] Heb. *Sheol.*

Assur-bani-pal, but the subjugation was not complete: it may have been this, however, that is alluded to here. Assur-bani-pal's account of it is quoted in *Encycl. Bib.* 374: 'I cut off the head of Teumman, their king, the rebel who had plotted evil. Beyond number I slew his warriors; alive in my hands I took his fighting men; with their corpses as with thorns and thistles I filled the vicinity of Susa; their blood I caused to flow in the Eulaeus, and I stained its waters like wool' (i.e. red wool). The bed is set for Elam in Hades by its inhabitants.

26–28. The next peoples in the list are Meshech and Tubal. These names have already occurred in this book (xxvii. 13). The date and particulars of the disaster which is alluded to here cannot be determined for lack of historical information. The interrogative form given to *v.* 27 in R.V. *marg.* suits the context best: the only meaning R.V. could convey would be that they would not meet with honourable burial. The language here as in *v.* 23 seems to breathe the spirit of Isaiah (xiv. 18, 19). The mention of the 'weapons of war' may refer to their armour being set up over their graves or depicted on their monuments. In later days the pillars of the Maccabaean monument at Modin had fashioned upon them 'all manner of arms for a perpetual memory' (1 Macc. xiii. 47) and the custom survives in military and naval monuments to the present day. 'Their iniquities are upon their bones' is a hyperbolical expression signifying that

29 with them that are slain by the sword. There is Edom, her kings and all her princes, which [1]in their might are laid with them that are slain by the sword: they shall lie with the uncircumcised, and with them that go down to
30 the pit. There be the princes of the north, all of them, and all the Zidonians, which are gone down with the slain; [2]in the terror which they caused by their might they are ashamed; and they lie uncircumcised with them that are slain by the sword, and bear their shame with
31 them that go down to the pit. Pharaoh shall see them, and shall be comforted over all his multitude: [3]even Pharaoh and all his army, slain by the sword, saith the
32 Lord GOD. For I have put [4]his terror in the land of the living: and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that are slain by the sword, even Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

[1] Or, *for all their might are slain &c.* [2] Or, *for all the terror* [3] Or, *Pharaoh and all his army are slain &c.* [4] Another reading is, *my*.

the remembrance of their wickedness abides even in the grave with them. Others have seen, by a slight emendation of the text, a reference in this passage to the Nephilim, the mighty men of antediluvian times (Gen. vi. 4). In *v.* 28 the prophecy returns to its chief subject, the people of Egypt.

29. Edom follows. Her judgement had been pronounced more than three years before (xxv. 12–14). There is no definite record of any great disaster having happened to the Edomites, between whom and the Jews there was always a mutual antagonism. No doubt they were tributary to Assyria, as the inscriptions tell us. The Septuagint translator read Asshur for Edom, but this seems an improbable reading owing to the previous occurrence of Asshur in the prophecy. It is much more likely, if the text needs emendation at all, that Aram (i.e. Syria) should be read here.

30. Last of all come the princes of the north (i.e. Gomer and Togarmah: see xxxviii. 6) and the Zidonians. Zidon had been prophesied against previously (see xxviii. 20–24). The marginal rendering 'for all the terror' gives the best sense. Zidon was at this time treated as the leading Northern State.

31, 32. The king of Egypt is to see all this: and it is to be a cause of comfort to him to find that others have had to undergo like troubles. In *v.* 32 the Hebrew text followed by R.V. *margin* is to be preferred, as no meaning can be given to R.V. except by a very forced exegetical

lvii. *At this point, though there is no new chronological statement, an entirely different departure is made which culminates in the prophecies of the restoration of Israel, and its ideal settlement in an idealised Canaan, with which the book concludes. The transitional prophecies are two in number, one declaring the ministerial responsibility of the prophet* (xxxiii. 1–9), *the other the moral responsibility of each individual member of the house of Israel* (xxxiii. 10–20). xxxiii. 1–9 *deals then with the prophet's responsibility.*

XXXIII. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and
say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the
people of the land take a man from among them, and set
3 him for their watchman: if, when he seeth the sword
come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the
4 people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the
trumpet, and taketh not warning, if the sword come, and
take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.
5 He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not
warning; his blood shall be upon him: whereas if he had
6 taken warning he should have delivered his soul. But if
the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the
trumpet, and the people be not warned, and the sword
come, and take any person from among them; he is
taken away [1]in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at
7 the watchman's hand. So thou, son of man, I have set

[1] Or, *for*

method. The late Prof. A. B. Davidson suggested an alteration of the previous verb, and would read 'he caused his terror.'

XXXIII. 1–9. No date is given to this prophecy and the next. We are, therefore, left to conclude that they belong to the same date as the previous ones. It will be noticed, however, that the date in *v.* 21 is a somewhat earlier one. The expression 'the children of thy people' (so *vv.* 12, 17, 30) has not occurred since iii. 11 and occurs once more

thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear
the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.
8 When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt
surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked
from his way; that wicked man shall die [1]in his iniquity,
9 but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless,
if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, and
he turn not from his way; he shall die in his iniquity, but
thou hast delivered thy soul.

lviii. *The definite assertion of individual responsibility for sin. This is made in a way in which it had never before been made to the Jewish people, and therefore marks a distinct step forward towards the enunciation of evangelical truth in the Gospel dispensation. Implicitly the duties of repentance and faith are also inculcated in these verses.* XXXIII. 10–20.

10 And thou, son of man, say unto the house of Israel:
Thus ye speak, saying, [2]Our transgressions and our sins are
upon us, and we pine away [1]in them; how then should we
11 live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I
have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the

[1] Or, *for* [2] Or, *Truly our transgressions &c.*

later (XXXVII. 18). 'The daughters of thy people' are mentioned in XIII. 17.

The prophet is compared here, as to his responsibility, to a watchman on guard against hostile invasion. That of the watchman and that of the individuals over whom he watches is accurately defined. The whole prophecy is almost identical in substance with III. 16–21 (see note there, and cp. Is. LII. 8: LVI. 10: LXII. 6: Jer. VI. 17). 'Thou hast delivered thy soul' (*v.* 9) means only 'thou hast saved thy life,' though a fuller force has been read into the expression in later times.

10–20. Having stated his own responsibility as a watchman, the prophet is now bidden to enforce their absolute personal responsibility upon his individual hearers. They are represented as being in despair because of the burden of their sins, and as having no hope of life—they are pining away and see nothing but death in front of them. This condition is pourtrayed most strikingly

wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from
your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?
12 And thou, son of man, say unto the children of thy people,
The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him
in the day of his transgression; and as for the wickedness
of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he
turneth from his wickedness: neither shall he that is
righteous be able to live thereby in the day that he
13 sinneth. When I say to the righteous, that he shall surely
live; if he trust to his righteousness, and commit iniquity,
none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered; but [1]in
his iniquity that he hath committed, [2]therein shall he die.
14 Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die;
if he turn from his sin, and do [3]that which is lawful and
15 right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that
he had taken by robbery, walk in the statutes of life,
committing no iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not
16 die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be
remembered against him: he hath done that which is lawful

[1] Or, *for* [2] Or, *for it* [3] Heb. *judgement and righteousness.*

just at the time of the final fall of the city. The same unhappy state is described in xxxvii. 11. The answer comes at once. It is not God's pleasure that death should be their portion; they have but to turn and live. The adjuration of *v.* 11 is a common one in Ezekiel (see v. 11). What follows must be read side by side with and illustrated by the prophecy already uttered (xviii. 1–32), some of the verses being identical in language. For the view taken by the prophet of man's individual responsibility see Introd. p. xxxiv. In *v.* 14 we have not only a recollection of xviii. 27 but also a reproduction of the language of iii. 18, both passages looking back perhaps to the declaration of Gen. ii. 17: 'in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' *V.* 15 looks back to xviii. 7. 'Statutes of life' are statutes to live by (cp. xx. 11). With *v.* 11 cp. xviii. 23, 31; and with *vv.* 12, 13 cp. xviii. 24. *V.* 16 corresponds to xviii. 22; *vv.* 17, 20 to xviii. 25, 29; *v.* 18 to xviii. 24, 26; *v.* 19 to xviii. 21, 27; and the last part of *v.* 20 to xviii. 30.

In the depth of their despair the prophet, as God's mouthpiece, holds out to them one great source of comfort. Because their past has been what it has been, it does not follow that their future must be like it. The individual can rise from the depths of despair and return to a merciful God who has no pleasure in the wicked remaining

17 and right; he shall surely live. Yet the children of thy
people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for
18 them, their way is not equal. When the righteous turneth
from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall
19 even die [1]therein. And when the wicked turneth from
his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right,
20 he shall live thereby. Yet ye say, The way of the Lord
is not equal. O house of Israel, I will judge you every
one after his ways.

M. FROM THE MOMENT THAT THE NEWS OF THE FINAL FALL OF JERUSALEM REACHES THE CAPTIVES, THE PROPHET'S TONGUE IS SET LOOSE, AND HE BEGINS TO SPEAK OF A RESUSCITATION AND RESURRECTION. THE KINGDOM OF JEHOVAH IS TO BE RESTORED WITH FULL SPIRITUAL POWER, WHILE THE ENEMIES OF GOD'S PEOPLE, THE HEATHEN NATIONS, ARE TO BE UTTERLY DESTROYED. 585 B.C. CHAPTERS XXXIII. 21–XXXIX.

There is a difficulty here about the length of time which is supposed to elapse between the fall of the city and the announcement of that fall. The fall took place 18 months previously. In consequence some would read here, and probably rightly, eleventh for twelfth, which is the reading of the Syriac version. The years 'of our captivity' are dated from Jehoiachin's captivity (i. 2).

lix. *The news arrives: the prophet is no more dumb: the judgement is to be thorough: and then men will begin to seek to hear the prophet's words, though at first they may not carry them out.* xxxiii. 21–33.

21 And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our
captivity, in the tenth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the

[1] Or, *for them*

as he is. Such a truth as this is needed and requires to be reasserted in all generations to any who are inclined to despair and say that it is no good attempting to retrieve their position. It is true the past can never be undone or lived over again: but amendment can be made for it.

21, 22. Ezekiel is represented as

month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came
22 unto me, saying, The city is smitten. Now the hand of the
LORD had been upon me in the evening, afore he that was
escaped came; and he had opened my mouth, until he
came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened,
23 and I was no more dumb. And the word of the LORD
24 came unto me, saying, Son of man, they that inhabit
those waste places in the land of Israel speak, saying,
Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: but we are
25 many; the land is given us for inheritance. Wherefore
say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Ye eat with the
blood, and lift up your eyes unto your idols, and shed
26 blood: and shall ye possess the land? Ye stand upon your
sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one his
27 neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land? Thus

having prophesied this almost exactly three years before (xxiv. 26, 27), when the approach of Nebuchadrezzar to Jerusalem was announced to him (xxiv. 2). 'In that day he that escapeth shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears. In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak and be no more dumb.' For a description of the last days of Jerusalem see 2 K. xxv. 2–11: 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17–20: Jer. xxxix. 1–14: lii. 4–16. For the prophet's use of the expression 'the hand of the Lord' see i. 3.

23, 24. In these verses the people who are still in Palestine are represented as protesting against being dispossessed of the land which has been laid waste. Surely if Abraham, a mere individual, was allowed to possess it (cp. Is. li. 2), they might claim it as theirs. One of the great boasts of the Jewish people was 'We have Abraham to our father' (Matth. iii. 9: Luke iii. 8), 'Our father is Abraham' (John viii. 39). There seems to have been a popular belief that, the God of the nation having once given the land, it was inalienable from His people (Judg. xi. 24).

25, 26. The prophet at once disposes of their claim: through their wickedness they have forfeited it. They have broken the Noachic precepts (Gen. vi. 4 'Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat') as well as their own laws (Lev. iii. 17 'ye shall eat neither fat nor blood'): they have committed idolatry (cp. xviii. 6): they have done deeds of violence (xxii. 3, 4): they have trusted to might rather than to right: all sorts of abomination have been committed (see xxii. 10, 11 for instances). No wonder then that they are losing their land.

27–29. Once more the punishment is announced which is to bring them to a knowledge of the Lord,

shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: As I live, surely they that are in the waste places shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the strong
28 holds and in the caves shall die of the pestilence. And I will make the land a desolation and an astonishment, and the pride of her power shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through.
29 Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land a desolation and an astonishment, because of all their abominations which they have committed.
30 And as for thee, son of man, the children of thy people talk of thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh
31 forth from the LORD. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but do them not: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth

and it is accompanied by a solemn adjuration: 'as I live' (cp. v. 11). The devastation would lead to an increase of the beasts of prey, whilst pestilence would invade the habitations and caves in which they would take refuge. It may be interesting in this connection to mention that there are said to have been lions in Palestine down to the 12th century A.D. Jeremiah from his dwelling in Egypt could describe Palestine in words corresponding to those in *v.* 28 (Jer. xliv. 2, 6, 22). The mountains of Israel had been the seat of much of the surviving heathen worship, and they were to become desolate. The resulting knowledge of the Lord is one of the distinctive notes of the whole book (see vi. 7).

30–33. In these last verses of this section we have a personal touch, in which the relations between the prophet and his fellow countrymen in captivity are described. They invite one another to go and listen to the prophet. The rendering of R.V. *marg.* 'a love song' is to be preferred (cp. Is. v. 1). His words have a delightful sound to them, but it is sound merely; they do not practice what he preaches, though they had resorted to him for years past (see viii. 1), and though they called themselves the Lord's people (*my* people *v.* 31). This spirit was one which others had denounced (Ps. lxxviii. 36, 37: Is. xxix. 13 quoted by our Lord and applied to the Jews of his day: Matth. xv. 8, 9: Mk vii. 6, 7: Jer. xii.

32 after their gain. And, lo, thou art unto them as [1]a very
lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play
well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they
33 do them not. And when this cometh to pass, (behold, it
cometh,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been
among them.

lx. *The Lord through His prophet condemns the rulers and guides of His people, and pronounces judgement upon them. A separation is to take place between the good and the bad, and Jehovah will be the Good Shepherd of His people, while David shall be their ruler.* XXXIV. 1–31.

The break indicated by a new paragraph at *v.* 20 is not needed.

XXXIV. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of
Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, even to the shep-
herds, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Woe unto the shepherds

[1] Or, *a love song*

2). Gain was their main thought (Jer. xxii. 17) as it is with so many of to-day, who can sit in the comfortable reserved pew in church or chapel and think that they have fulfilled the weightiest matter of God's law. Hearing is not doing: our Lord emphasises this in the closing words of the Sermon on the Mount (Matth. vii. 26, 27: cp. Lk. vi. 49). But when the trouble comes in all its fulness, to each generation alike, then the force of the words of the true and loyal preacher of righteousness will be recognized.

XXXIV. 1–6. Denunciation of the shepherds for their self-indulgence, while the flock is not tended but scattered abroad with none to look after it. The prophecy is actually addressed to these shepherds. The whole of it is closely connected in subject-matter and language with Jer. xxiii. 1–8 which should be carefully compared with it (cp. also Zech. xi. 15–17 which echoes the older prophecies). 'Shepherds' is the name given here to the rulers of the state, king and princes. We have the same idea in the Greek expression ποιμὴν λαῶν. In the New Testament this metaphorical expression is taken over from the Old Testament and applied to religious teachers and rulers. Some of these are selfish and careless (see Jude 12 quoted later), like the rulers of this passage. The prophecy of

of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shep-
3 herds feed the sheep? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you
with the wool, ye kill the fatlings; but ye feed not the
4 sheep. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither
have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound
up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again
that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that
which was lost; but with force and with rigour have ye
5 ruled over them. And they were scattered, because there
was no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts
6 of the field, and were scattered. My sheep wandered
through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea,
my sheep were scattered upon all the face of the earth;

Jeremiah is the earlier by almost twenty years and was delivered in Jerusalem while this was published in Babylonia. We do not read of any intercourse as having taken place between the two prophets, though we can gather, e.g. from xxxiii. 21, that communications were kept up between Jerusalem and those of the captivity. The shepherds are represented as caring only for themselves just as in the New Testament we read of 'shepherds that without fear feed themselves' (Jude 12), whereas it was their duty to feed the flock. They eat the fat, i.e. the fatted part of the flock: the Septuagint by a different vocalization of the Hebrew read 'the milk.' The sin of the rulers had been denounced in equally scathing language at an earlier date by Micah (iii. 2, 3). Here the various ways in which they should have cared for the flock are described in *v.* 4. The word used for 'rigour' is an unusual one, and only used elsewhere of the treatment by the Egyptians of the Israelites when in bondage (Ex. i. 13, 14) and in Leviticus (xxv. 43, 53) of the treatment of the poor Israelite ('thou shalt not rule over him with rigour'). The ordinary Israelite was constantly being reduced to this condition. Micaiah 300 years before this prophecy was delivered 'saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd.' Later, in Zechariah (x. 2), we read of the people 'they go their way like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.' And when our Lord came, and saw a great multitude, 'He had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd' (Mk vi. 34: cp. Matth. ix. 36). The consequence was, in Ezekiel's time, that they became an easy prey to any who attacked them. 'Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones' (Jer. l. 17). The people were absolutely neglected by

and there was none that did search or seek *after them.*
7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:
8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely forasmuch as my sheep became a prey, and my sheep became meat to all the beasts of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my sheep, but the
9 shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my sheep; there-
10 fore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my sheep at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the sheep; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; and I will deliver my sheep from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.
11 For thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I myself, even I,
12 will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in [1]the cloudy and dark day.
13 And I will bring them out from the peoples, and gather

[1] Heb. *the day of clouds and thick darkness.*

those who ought to have cared for them.

7–10. The address turns directly to the shepherds. They are to be made responsible and their sheep rescued from their neglect and oppression. The adjuration 'As I live, saith the Lord God' (cp. xvi. 48) recurs and corresponds to the 'Verily, verily' of the New Testament. The sheep and the shepherds were alike God's; because the shepherds had not acted as if they were God's officers, God's sheep should no longer be entrusted to them. 'I will require my sheep at their hand' means that they will have to give account for their neglect. For the future they would neither tend the flock nor be able to indulge themselves.

11–16. The Lord God Himself will act the part of a good shepherd to the flock. We have here an anticipation of New Testament language: 'the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost' (Lk. xix. 10): 'I am the good shepherd' (John x. 11). The language of this chapter is recalled to us more than once by our Lord's words (Matth. ix. 36: xxv. 32: John x. 8, 11: cp. Heb. xiii. 20: 1 Pet. ii. 25: v. 4), and shews how much it had impressed itself upon His mind. The representation of our Lord as the

them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited places
14 of the country. I will feed them with good pasture, and upon the mountains of the height of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie down in a good fold, and on fat
15 pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I myself will feed my sheep, and I will cause them to lie
16 down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and will bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: and the fat and the strong I will destroy;
17 I will feed them in judgement. And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I judge between cattle
18 and cattle, as well the rams as the he-goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have fed upon the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture? and to have drunk of the clear waters, but ye must

good Shepherd is one of the earliest in the Catacombs at Rome. 'The cloudy and dark day' is the same as that which is called elsewhere 'the day of the Lord' (e.g. Joel i. 15: ii. 1, 2 where 'the cloudy and dark day' appears again: Zeph. i. 7). There is to be a restoration of the scattered people, who are to be gathered together again (see xi. 17). The simile of the flock is kept up throughout. With the first words of *v.* 15 cp. Is. xl. 11 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd' and with *v.* 16 cp. Mic. iv. 6. At the same time judgement is to come upon the oppressors, described as 'the fat and the strong.'

It is possible for us to read into this passage by a comparison of *vv.* 14, 15 and *v.* 23 an identification in some way or other between the Lord God and David the servant prince (cp. Ps. cx. 1), but we may feel certain that such an idea could scarcely have entered into the prophet's mind. The idea to him would be of David as the vicegerent of the Lord God.

17–19. At this point the address is directed to the flock and not to the shepherds. In the flock there is to be a discrimination between the great and powerful and the rest of the flock. We cannot fail to be reminded of our Lord's words in reference to the final judgement:—'He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats' (Matth. xxv. 32), though the likeness is one of language rather than of matter. 'Cattle and cattle,' as they are called here and in *v.* 22, are defined as 'the fat cattle and the lean cattle' in *v.* 20. Whether the

19 foul the residue with your feet? And as for my sheep, they
eat that which ye have trodden with your feet, and they
drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.
20 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them: Behold,
I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and the lean
21 cattle. Because ye thrust with side and with shoulder,
and push all the diseased with your horns, till ye have
22 scattered them abroad; therefore will I save my flock, and
they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between
23 cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over
them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he
24 shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I
the LORD will be their God, and my servant David prince
25 among them; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will
make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause evil

prophet had in his own mind any distinction between the rams and the he-goats, as representative of the ruling classes here, is not clear. The 'he-goats' are marked out for punishment by a later prophet (Zech. x. 3), while the ram and the he-goat are used as emblems of great power in Daniel (viii. 3–8). The indictment against the powerful in the present passage is that they not only took the best but spoilt for others what they did not use for themselves, so that they have trampled down the pasture and fouled the waters for the weak.

20–31. The judgement and discrimination is to be followed by a restoration. The violence of the rulers is here pourtrayed: if one has ever watched a flock of sheep one can see how observant the prophet has been of the world of nature: the weak ones 'go to the wall' in the flock. But they were to have a deliverer: the certainty of the judgement is indicated by its threefold announcement (*vv.* 17, 20, 22). Following upon the judgement there is to be one ruler set over them (cp. xxxvii. 22, 24: Jer. xxiii. 5: Mic. v. 4: so too 2 Esdr. ii. 34) identified with David (xxxvii. 24, 25) who had been the shepherd of Israel. *V.* 24 makes David the viceroy of the Lord, with the Lord as their God (cp. xxxvii. 27 following upon xxxvii. 25): for its last words see xvii. 24. A lasting covenant of peace was to follow (so xxxvii. 26): such a covenant had existed before but had been broken by the people's defection (cp. Num. xxv. 12: Is. liv. 10: Ecclus. xlv. 24). As a consequence there would be peace without any fear of invasion (cp. Lev. xxvi. 6: Is. xi. 6–8, where the figurative comparison is worked out: xxxv. 9: lxv. 25: Hos. ii. 18). The security of the people is insisted upon several times in the present series of prophecies (xxxviii. 8, 14:

beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell
26 securely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I
will make them and the places round about my hill a
blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its
27 season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree
of the field shall yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield
her increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and
they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken
the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the
28 hand of those that [1]served themselves of them. And they
shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the
beast of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell
29 securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will
raise up unto them a [2]plantation for renown, and they
shall be no more [3]consumed with famine in the land,

[1] Or, *made bondmen* [2] Or, *plant* [3] Heb. *taken away.*

xxxix. 26). It should be remembered that the term 'wilderness' here means 'untilled land' not necessarily a barren desert: a great deal of it was pasture land. The people would then be a source of blessing to the world around them (cp. Gen. xii. 2, 3: Is. xix. 24: Zech. viii. 13), so that blessing would come down like the seasonable shower upon the thirsty land (cp. Mal. iii. 10). Material prosperity would accompany the security of the inhabitants (so xxxvi. 30). The idea of breaking the bars of the yoke is common to this passage with Jer. xxx. 8: Nah. i. 13. 'Those that served themselves of them' is a quaint expression for 'those that made them their slaves.' *V.* 28 sums up what had been already said in previous verses. In the future they were to be like a tree or plant, planted by the Lord Himself and therefore famous (cp. Is. lx. 21 'the branch of my planting': lxi. 3 'that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord': Numb. xxiv. 6 'as lign-aloes which the Lord hath planted'). They were no more to suffer famine (so xxxvi. 29) or to be scorned by the heathen: but instead they were to acknowledge their dutiful relation to the Lord their God and realise that after all they were but human, men and not God (cp. xxviii. 12 'thou art man and not God').

It is very likely that, so far as Ezekiel himself was concerned, he would expect a speedy restoration of the Jewish monarchy, in much the same way as St Paul seems at first to have anticipated a speedy return of the Lord. This would be expressed by him in the form of the setting up of a David upon the throne, David being the ideal king that was looked back to, and also because of the promises that had

30 neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. And
they shall know that I the LORD their God am with them,
and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, saith the
31 Lord GOD. And ye my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are
men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD.

lxi. *Edom because of its perpetual hostility to Israel is to have severe punishment meted out to it, and thus to realise the power of the Lord.* XXXV. 1–15.

XXXV. 1 Moreover the word of the LORD came
2 unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against mount
3 Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith
the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against thee, O mount Seir,
and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will
4 make thee a desolation and an astonishment. I will lay
thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate; and thou
5 shalt know that I am the LORD. Because thou hast had a
perpetual enmity, and hast given over the children of
Israel to the power of the sword in the time of their

been made concerning David's line. Later ages can see in all this its true Messianic meaning though it is not clear that Ezekiel identified the David of his prophecy with the Messiah that was to come.

XXXV. 1–12. The prophets with one consent denounced Edom for its unbrotherly relations and hostility (cp. XXV. 12). Isaiah (XXXIV. 5: cp. XXI. 11, 22), Jeremiah (XXV. 21: XLIX. 7–22), Amos (I. 11, 12), Obadiah (throughout), Malachi (I. 4), all alike testify to the strong animosity there was on the part of the Jews against the Edomites. 'Mount Seir' is used here as an equivalent for Edom. It was the name for the range of mountains which ran from the southern end of the Dead Sea to the head of the Gulf of Akabah, the eastern of the two northern forks of the Red Sea. The country about it was occupied by those whose descent was traced from Esau the brother of Jacob the father of the twelve patriarchs. The chief towns ('cities' *v.* 4) of Edom were Bozrah, Sela (i.q. Petra), Elath, Ezion-geber, and, perhaps, Teman, if Teman was the name of a town as well as a district. The expression of Edom's hostility at the time of the fall of Jerusalem seems to have been very bitter. 'Remember, O Lord, against the children of Edom the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation

6 calamity, in the time of the [1]iniquity of the end: therefore,
as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto
blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not
7 hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue thee. Thus will
I make mount Seir an astonishment and a desolation; and
I will cut off from it him that passeth through and him
8 that returneth. And I will fill his mountains with his
slain: in thy hills and in thy valleys and in all thy water-
9 courses shall they fall that are slain with the sword. I
will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall
not [2]be inhabited: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.
10 Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two
countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; [3]whereas the
11 LORD was there: therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD,
I will do according to thine anger, and according to thine
envy which thou hast shewed out of thy hatred against
them; and I will make myself known among them, [4]when
12 I shall judge thee. And thou shalt know [5]that I the LORD
have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken
against the mountains of Israel, saying, [6]They are laid

[1] Or, *punishment* [2] Another reading is, *return.* [3] Or, *though* [4] Or, *according as* [5] Or, *that I am the* LORD*; I have heard &c.* [6] Or, *It is*

thereof' (Ps. cxxxvii. 7: cp. Am. i. 11: Obad. 10–14). For the phrase 'in the time of the iniquity of the end' see xxi. 25. The word 'sith' (= since), which occurs several times in A.V. as originally printed, only survives here in R.V. The punishment of Edom is to come in full measure. Passage through its wasted country will be dangerous, as it was to be in Egypt (xxix. 11). There was to be a great slaughter: the language throughout is like that which is used about Egypt (xxxi., xxxii.). The two nations and two countries are the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (so xxxvii. 22 'they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all'). Edom is one of a number of nations who are said to have made a covenant against God's people (Ps. lxxxiii. 5, 6), amongst whom, as the prophet says, God dwelt (cp. Joel iii. 21). Here, too, they claim Palestine as their own as in the following prophecy:—'all Edom, which have appointed my land unto themselves for a possession' (xxxvi. 5). It is not clear, however, whether they actually took possession, though they claimed it, of any part of the Jewish territory upon the fall of Jerusalem. Later, in the time of 1 Maccabees (v. 65) Hebron and the neighbourhood had

13 desolate, they are given us to devour. And ye have
magnified yourselves against me with your mouth, and
have multiplied your words against me: I have heard it.
14 Thus saith the Lord GOD: When the whole earth rejoiceth,
15 I will make thee desolate. As thou didst rejoice over the
inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate,
so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount
Seir, and all Edom, even all of it: and they shall know
that I am the LORD.

lxii. *A further prophecy looking back to the last. As the last was addressed to Mount Seir, so this one, in due symmetry, is addressed to the mountains of Israel. It continues the promise of restoration to God's people.* xxxvi. 1–15.

XXXVI. 1 And thou, son of man, prophesy unto the
mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear
2 the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because
the enemy hath said against you, Aha! and, The ancient

become Edomite. The name Idumaea (i.e. land of Edom) goes back to 312 B.C. (*Encycl. Bib.* 1186). They were to receive according to the measure they had meted out of anger and hatred. Blasphemies (*v.* 12) are the calumnious statements which Edom had made in derision of their fallen foe. For this they are treated, in accordance with the belief of the time that the enemies of God's people must be God's enemies, as hostile to Him. Moreover, they had never been employed like the Babylonians as the instruments of Divine wrath. In consequence they should be laid waste, and their desolation was to be a cause of general rejoicing.

XXXVI. 1–7. An apostrophic address to the mountains of Israel. These are constantly mentioned by Ezekiel; perhaps the level country round the Tigris and Euphrates, by its contrast with their own hills and mountains, brought back to the captives the constant remembrance of their own fatherland. 'The enemy' includes all those that had conspired against Israel: 'the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre: Assyria also is joined with them; they have holpen the children of Lot' (Ps. lxxxiii. 6–8). The interjection 'Aha!' is ascribed to Ammon

3 high places are ours in possession: therefore prophesy, and
say, Thus saith the Lord God: Because, even because they
have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every
side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the
nations, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and the
4 evil report of the people: therefore, ye mountains of
Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the
Lord GOD to the mountains and to the hills, to the water-
courses and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to
the cities that are forsaken, which are become a prey and
derision to the residue of the nations that are round about:
5 therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Surely in the fire of
my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the
nations, and against all Edom, which have appointed my
land unto themselves for a possession with the joy of all
their heart, with despite of soul, to cast it out for a prey:
6 therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say
unto the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses
and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I
have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye

(xxv. 3) and to Tyre (xxvi. 2). 'The ancient high places' would include not only the temple but also the various sacred sites of the different inhabitants of Canaan. The destruction of God's people had become a topic of conversation amongst all the nations and they had lost the repute which they had. It had come upon them and their land (cp. vi. 2, 3 where the language of description resembles that of the present passage) in accordance with prophecy. 'The residue of the nations' (*vv.* 3, 4, 5) must be the population that remained after the Babylonian deportations. The idea intended to be conveyed by the expression 'the fire of my jealousy' is best explained by 'The Lord thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God' (Deut. iv. 24). God claims an undivided allegiance from His people: the expression occurs again in Zeph. i. 18 'the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy.' In the New Testament (Heb. x. 27) we find the expression reversed, 'a jealousy of fire which shall devour the adversaries': the words there seem to be a recollection of Is. xxvi. 11. The mention of Edom in especial looks back to the previous prophecy (xxxv. 1–15), where Edom also claims possession of Canaan (xxxv. 10). The same feelings that actuated Edom are ascribed to the children of Ammon: 'thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced with all

7 have borne the shame of the heathen: therefore thus saith
the Lord GOD: I have lifted up mine hand, *saying*, Surely
the heathen that are round about you, they shall bear
8 their shame. But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot
forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people
9 Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am
for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled
10 and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house
of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited,
11 and the waste places shall be builded: and I will multiply
upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be
fruitful: and I will cause you to be inhabited after your
former estate, and will do better *unto you* than at your
12 beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Yea,
I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel;
and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their
inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave
13 them of children. Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because they

the despite of thy soul against the land of Israel' (xxv. 6, where see note on the expression 'despite of soul'). The words 'to cast it out for a prey' do not give much sense: it is difficult to see how the land could be cast out. Toy emends the Hebrew so as to make it mean 'to take possession of it for a prey.' 'The shame of the heathen' is the shame or disgrace which the heathen have brought upon you. The lifting up of the hand is the mark of solemn asseveration (cp. Gen. xiv. 22) and is used by many witnesses in the law courts of to-day as a preliminary to giving evidence. The heathen in their turn are to be brought to shame, and then will come the restoration of Israel. The comparison of the people to a tree is a constant one (cp. c. xvii.), and it must be the branches and fruit that are referred to in the last clause of *v.* 8 'they are at hand to come.'

8–12. God who had been against them (v. 8) will now be for them, and the desolate places shall be cultivated, whilst the forsaken and ruinous cities shall be inhabited again with an abundant population, as had also been promised by Jeremiah (xxx. 18, 19: xxxi. 27). These promises are repeated in *vv.* 33, 35: xxxvii. 26. The land is represented as bereaving the people of children by what it suffered in the way of devastation and punishment for its sins.

13–15. The idea of the last words of *v.* 12 is carried on in this fresh declaration. It is the land that has caused all the trouble: it had eaten

say unto you, Thou *land* art a devourer of men, and hast
14 been a bereaver of thy [1]nation; therefore thou shalt
devour men no more, neither [2]bereave thy [1]nation any
15 more, saith the Lord GOD; neither will I [3]let thee hear any
more the shame of the heathen, neither shalt thou bear
the reproach of the peoples any more, neither shalt thou
cause thy [1]nation to stumble any more, saith the Lord
GOD.

lxiii. *A further prophecy of cleansing and restoration for Israel.* XXXVI. 16–38.

The main idea conveyed in this prophecy is that it is clearly necessary that by the restoration of the people Jehovah's position should be asserted and His omnipotence declared to the world. He who had power to punish had power also to restore to favour and in that power to guide His people for the future. The heathen nations were to be disabused of the idea that Jehovah was not strong enough to guard Israel.

16 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
17 Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own
land, they defiled it by their way and by their doings:
their way before me was as the uncleanness of a woman
18 in her separation. Wherefore I poured out my fury upon
them for the blood which they had poured out upon the
land, and because they had defiled it with their idols:
19 and I scattered them among the nations, and they were
dispersed through the countries: according to their way

[1] Another reading is, *nations*. [2] Another reading is, *cause to stumble*.
[3] Or, *proclaim against thee*

up the inhabitants (cp. Num. xiii. 32) by causing them to perish of want. If we read with R.V. *marg.* in *vv.* 13–15 'nations' for 'nation' the prophet must be supposed to refer to Israel and Judah. In *v.* 14 the reading of R.V. 'bereave' is to be preferred to that of the margin 'cause to stumble.'

16–21. The state of the people and their punishment is described. Impurity, violence, and idolatry were their ruin. It was these that brought about their dispersion, and in their dispersion they brought discredit upon Jehovah, in whose land they had dwelt. We have here an allusion to the popular belief that

20 and according to their doings I judged them. And when
they came unto the nations, whither they went, they
profaned my holy name; in that men said of them, These
are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his
21 land. But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house
of Israel had profaned among the nations, whither they
22 went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith
the Lord GOD: [1]I do not *this* for your sake, O house of
Israel, but for mine holy name, which ye have profaned
23 among the nations, whither ye went. And I will sanctify
my great name, which hath been profaned among the
nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and
the nations shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord
GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before [2]their eyes.
24 For I will take you from among the nations, and gather
you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your
25 own land. And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and
ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all
26 your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I
give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I
will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will

[1] Or, *I work not for &c.* [2] Or, according to another reading, *your*

the god of a land had no authority outside that land. The pity that Jehovah shewed, He shewed for the sake of His Name, that its profanation might go no further.

22–32. The thought of *v.* 21 is enlarged in these verses (cp. Ps. cxv.). The purification and the restoration that are to come are to be, in the first place, for God's honour and glory. These verses begin and end with this idea (cp. *v.* 22 with *v.* 32). God's Name is to be hallowed before the heathen nations (cp. xx. 41): and this will bring the knowledge of Jehovah to them (so xxxviii. 23: xxxix. 7, 21), when they see His people gathered together again in their own land (see xi. 17: xxxvii. 12, 21). The advance in spiritual teaching conveyed in *vv.* 25–27 will be found treated of in the Introduction, pp. xxxiii. ff. The idea of sprinkling to cleanse is common to this passage with Is. lii. 15 'So shall He sprinkle many nations' (so R.V., but see R.V. *marg.*; cp. Is. iv. 4: Jer. xxxiii. 8) and occurs in the New Testament in Heb. x. 22 'having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.' It is distinct from 'the blood of sprinkling' (Heb. xii. 24) and the 'sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,' which looks back

27 give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit
within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye
28 shall keep my judgements, and do them. And ye shall
dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall
29 be my people, and I will be your God. And I will save
you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the
corn, and will multiply it, and lay no famine upon you.
30 And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase
of the field, that ye shall receive no more the reproach of
31 famine among the nations. Then shall ye remember your
evil ways, and your doings that were not good; and ye
shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities
32 and for your abominations. Not for your sake [1]do I *this*,
saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed
33 and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel. Thus
saith the Lord GOD: In the day that I cleanse you from
all your iniquities, I will cause the cities to be inhabited,

[1] Or, *do I work*

to the Levitical ordinances and the sprinkling of the blood of the sin offering before the Lord (Lev. iv. 6, 17). The idols were a source of uncleanness not only because of the idolatrous worship but also because of the impure rites which accompanied that worship. The new heart, instead of the stony heart, and the new spirit have already been spoken of (xi. 19, 20). The new spirit is to be God's Spirit (*v.* 27: cp. xxxvii. 14) and by it they will become docile and obedient (so also xi. 20: xxxvii. 24). Their old land shall be theirs again (xxviii. 25: xxxvii. 25), and the old relation between Jehovah and His people shall be re-established (xi. 20: xxxvii. 23: Ex. vi. 7: Lev. xxvi. 12). Deliverance and rescue will bring with it material abundance (so xxxiv. 27, 29). The reproach of famine is the reproach that they incurred amongst the heathen because of the disasters that came upon them: cp. Joel ii. 19 'I will no more make you a reproach among the nations.' The thought of their past transgressions will bring with it a sense of shame and humiliation (see vi. 9). *V.* 32 repeats the idea of *v.* 22. It was good for the people of Israel to be ashamed of the past when the glory of God's holy Name was once again vindicated.

33–36. A renewal of the promise of restoration follows (cp. *vv.* 9, 10, 25). The comparison of the restored land to the garden of Eden is made in Isaiah (li. 3) and 'Eden, the garden of God' has been mentioned more than once already by

34 and the waste places shall be builded. And the land that
was desolate shall be tilled, whereas it was a desolation in
35 the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This
land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden;
and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fenced
36 and inhabited. Then the nations that are left round
about you shall know that I the LORD have builded the
ruined places, and planted that which was desolate: I the
LORD have spoken it, and I will do it.
37 Thus saith the Lord GOD: For this moreover will I be
inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will
38 increase them with men like a flock. As the [1]flock for
sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed feasts;
so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and
they shall know that I am the LORD.

[1] Heb. *flock of holy things.*

Ezekiel (xxviii. 13: xxxi. 8, 9). The restoration of Israel was to be an object-lesson to the neighbouring peoples. 'Then said they among the nations, The Lord hath done great things for them' (Ps. cxxvi. 2). For the last words of *v.* 36 cp. xvii. 24.

37, 38. In answer to their petitions the population of the land was to be greatly increased. This would naturally be only a gradual process. In Nehemiah's time, in Jerusalem itself, he tells us 'the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded' (Neh. vii. 4). Jehovah would allow Himself to be approached, and, in consequence, the people would recognize His power (see vi. 7). The 'flock of Jerusalem' was the abundance of animals for sacrifice that were taken up to Jerusalem, especially at the time of the great feasts. At such a time as the Passover the sacrifices were almost innumerable. According to Josephus there were about 120,000 priests in all attached to the Temple worship, in the early days of the Christian era.

lxiv. *The vision of the valley of dry bones, and the Divine interpretation of that vision.* xxxvii. 1–14.

The language descriptive of this vision is of a unique and magnificent kind. There is a weirdness about the first part, and a realism about the whole that enthrals us. We seem to see the entire scene enacted, stage by stage, as the loose dry bones of each human frame collect together, and each takes its natural place in the building up of a skeleton. Then in due order sinews, flesh and skin come upon each to cover its framework. But the principle of life is still lacking. So a new development in the scene is required. The prophet is directed to invoke the spirit or breath from all quarters to enter into and take possession of the lifeless forms; the breath from the four winds arrives and immediately an immense host springs into existence, full of life and vigour.

It is clearly obvious that the primary signification of this vision, both to the prophet and to those to whom the prophet spoke, had nothing whatever to do with the resurrection of the individual from the dead. We may justly see in it language which expresses for us the idea of that 'Resurrection of the body,' or 'of the flesh' as it is called in our Baptismal Service, in which our simplest form of Creed calls upon us to declare our belief. But for the prophet and his audience the vision was intended to convey a promise not to the individual, but to the body politic, 'the whole house of Israel,' and to speak to them of a renewal, under Divine inspiration, of the national life, and of a restoration to their own land.

XXXVII. 1 The hand of the LORD was upon me,
and he carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set
me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of
2 bones; and he caused me to pass by them round about:
and behold, there were very many [1]in the open valley;

[1] Heb. *upon the face of the valley.*

XXXVII. 1–3. The vision of the valley full of bones. 'The hand of the Lord' is frequently mentioned by Ezekiel (see i. 3). In other passages it is 'the spirit' that 'lifts up' Ezekiel (see iii. 12). 'The valley' of this passage represents the same Hebrew word as 'the plain' of iii. 22: viii. 4. No doubt the locality of the various visions was the same, somewhere near the Chebar channel. This valley became for the time a charnel-house: the bones of the dead lying exposed on the face of the ground (R.V. *marg.* 'the face of the valley' is better than R.V. 'the open valley'). They had been lying there for some time and had become bare bones. The question insoluble to the prophet is

3 and lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of
man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD,
4 thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy over
these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the
5 word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these
bones: Behold, I will cause [1]breath to enter into you, and
6 ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will
bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put
breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that
7 I am the LORD. So I prophesied as I was commanded:
and as I prophesied, there was a [2]noise, and behold an
earthquake, and the bones came together, bone to his
8 bone. And I beheld, and lo, there were sinews upon
them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them above:
9 but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me,
Prophesy unto the [3]wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to
the [3]wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Come from the four
winds, O [4]breath, and breathe upon these slain, that
10 they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me,
and the breath came into them, and they lived, and

[1] Or, *spirit* [2] Or, *thundering* [3] Or, *breath* [4] Or, *wind* Or, *spirit*

put to him 'Can these bones live?' The answer he gives may be compared with the 'My Lord, thou knowest' of Rev. vii. 14, which however is addressed to an elder.

4–6. As he meditates upon this question he is bidden to address the bones themselves, and to announce the renewal of life to them. Ps. civ. 29, 30 seems to look back to this vision, 'Thou takest away their breath, they die, And return to their dust. Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created.' The bones like all else with which the prophet is concerned are to know the Lord (see vi. 7).

7, 8. The prophet carries out his instructions (cp. xii. 7: xxiv. 18) and his prophecy is fulfilled. The Hebrew word for 'noise' is a perfectly general one and means literally 'a voice' or 'sound.' The language becomes very realistic; we seem to see the bones of each individual body creeping together and being clothed with muscles and flesh and skin, but still lifeless.

9, 10. A further stage is reached. The prophet summons breath into the inert bodies. In Rev. xi. 11 we have a clear reflection of the words of *v.* 10: 'the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet.' By this passage we are led to the recollection of another:—'the Lord God... breathed into his nostrils the breath

stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.
11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are
the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones
are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off.
12 Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the
Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you
to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will
13 bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know
that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, and
caused you to come up out of your graves, O my people.
14 And I will put my [1]spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I
will place you in your own land: and ye shall know that
I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the
LORD.

lxv. *By a symbolical action is pourtrayed the reunion as well as the restoration of Ephraim and Judah under David as their head, with an everlasting covenant between God and His people.* xxxvii. 15–28.

15 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,
16 And thou, son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon

[1] Or, *breath*

of life' (Gen. ii. 7). The breath of God is the source of life. The Holy Ghost is the "Giver of Life."

11–14. The explanation of the vision. The bones stand for the people now, as it were, dead, but hereafter to be resuscitated from the desperate state in which they imagine themselves to be. A confession of a somewhat similar character is put into the mouth of the people in xxxiii. 10. Similar comparisons to a resurrection are to be found in Is. xxvi. 19: Hos. xiii. 14. The promise 'I will put My spirit in you' repeats that of the previous prophecy (xxxvi. 24), and for the last words of the verse see xvii. 24.

It is to be noted that 'the whole house of Israel' includes both the destroyed kingdoms of Israel and Judah; it is this thought which leads up to the next prophecy.

15–20. According to the second book of the Chronicles, after the disruption of the kingdom, in the reigns of Rehoboam and Asa, there was a migration of a certain number of people, besides priests and Levites,

it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and [1]*for* all the house of
17 Israel his companions: and join them for thee one to another into one stick, that they may become one in thine
18 hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou mean-
19 est by these? say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his companions; and I will put them [2]with it, *even* with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine
20 hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in

[1] Or, of [2] Or, *together with him unto* (or *to be*) *the stick of Judah*

from the Northern kingdom to the south. Benjamin threw in its fortunes with Judah (2 Chr. xi. 12, 13, 16) and besides we have mention of 'them that sojourned with them (i.e. with Judah and Benjamin) out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him (i.e. to Asa) out of Israel in abundance' (2 Chr. xv. 9). These are all included in 'Judah, and the children of Israel his companions' (*v.* 16). It is also to be remembered that later during the reformation carried out by Hezekiah persons from the still surviving remnant of Israel, divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun, went up to the supplementary passover in the second month (2 Chr. xxx. 11), so that there seems to have been a constant coming and going from the north of Palestine, even after the destruction of the Northern kingdom. Of the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim always took the lead. It was the most powerful and the richest of the ten tribes. The reunion of the people is symbolized by the joining of the two sticks into one (cp. *v.* 22). According to the Hebrew text the united stick is to be in Jehovah's (Mine) hand (*v.* 19): the versions point to another reading which would place it in Judah's hand, Judah being the central tribe of the undivided monarchy. Such a union is also looked forward to by Isaiah (xi. 13) when 'Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.' Exactly the opposite action is gone through in Zech. xi. 14 where the prophet cuts asunder his staff, Bands, to 'break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.' For the expression 'the children of thy people' (*v.* 18) see xxxiii. 2. More than once in this book the people are represented as asking the meaning of the prophet's actions (see especially xxiv. 19). Here the union of the sticks is at once explained: and it is clear that the action described was actually per-

21 thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus
saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the children of
Israel from among the nations, whither they be gone, and
will gather them on every side, and bring them into their
22 own land: and I will make them one nation in the land,
upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king
to them all: and they shall be no more two nations,
neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more
23 at all: neither shall they defile themselves any more with
their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any
of their transgressions: but I will save them [1]out of all
their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will
cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be
24 their God. And my servant David shall be king over
them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall
also walk in my judgements, and observe my statutes, and
25 do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have
given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt;

[1] Or, according to some ancient versions, *from all their backslidings*

formed, as was done on other occasions (see xii. 3).

21–28. The process of reunion and restoration is described more fully. The promise, first made in xi. 17 and repeated many times, is here made once more. The union of the two kingdoms is the first announcement of this prophecy: it was announced more vaguely by Jeremiah (l. 4). For the mountains of Israel see vi. 2. The one king is the one shepherd, David, of xxxiv. 23, who is to be a prince (xxxiv. 24). In this reunited kingdom there is to be no renewal of the old pollutions (xiv. 11). The people are to be cleansed and saved (so xxxvi. 25–29). In *v.* 23 the reading of the Septuagint 'from all their backslidings' (R.V. *marg.*) gives the better sense. The promise of xxxvi. 28 that the people shall be brought into close relation with God is repeated. For the way in which David is mentioned here see the note on xxxiv. 23 and cp. Jer. xxiii. 5 'I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king.' Under him the people were to be obedient to God's laws (so xxxvi. 27). Their land was to be restored to them (xxviii. 25 as well as xxxvi. 28), that land which had been given to Jacob as well as to his forefathers: for in the vision of Jacob's ladder we have the Lord saying to Jacob, 'the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it' (Gen. xxviii. 13: so again xxxv. 12). It is to be a perpetual habitation (cp. Is. lx. 21: Am. ix. 15), and the line of David is also to endure for

and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever: and David my servant
26 shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will [1]place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for
27 evermore. My tabernacle also shall be [2]with them; and
28 I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the nations shall know that [3]I am the LORD that sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.

lxvi. *The world-powers are to be permitted to make a final struggle against God's people.* xxxviii. 1–13.

The whole idea intended to be conveyed by this chapter and the greater part of the next is of countless hordes of barbarians coming from various quarters and sweeping down upon the lands which they were to invade with relentless force and violence. Other countries were to suffer as well as Israel. But this invasion was to be followed by a judgement of God upon the invaders, involving their entire destruction, which is described as taking place in the land of Israel, and being so universal that seven months would elapse before it would be entirely cleansed from the pollution caused by the multitude of dead which would have to be buried.

XXXVIII. 1 And the word of the LORD came unto
2 me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward Gog, of the

[1] Or, *give* it *them* [2] Or, *over* [3] Or, *I the* LORD *do sanctify Israel*

ever, for this is what Ezekiel must have meant by saying 'David my servant shall be their prince for ever.' The covenant of peace has been mentioned already (xxxiv. 25) and the 'everlasting covenant' of the future is spoken of also by Isaiah (lv. 3, where it is explained as the sure mercies of David: lxi. 8: Jer. xxxii. 40). The increase of the population has also been foretold already (xxxvi. 10, 25). The setting up of the sanctuary and tabernacle mentioned in *vv.* 26–28 is the prelude to their erection in the ideal Holy Land (xliii. 7). The same idea occurs in the account of the new Jerusalem in the Apocalypse (xxi. 3) where the language is very similar to that here: 'the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.' *V.* 28 repeats the idea of xxxvi. 23 (cp. also xx. 12).

XXXVIII. 1–9. Gog and Magog are peculiar to these two prophecies

land of Magog, the [1]prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal,
3 and prophesy against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord
GOD: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, [1]prince of Rosh,
4 Meshech, and Tubal: and I will turn thee about, and put
hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all
thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in
full armour, a great company with buckler and shield, all
5 of them handling swords: Persia, Cush, and Put with
6 them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all
his hordes; the house of Togarmah in the uttermost parts
of the north, and all his hordes: even many peoples with

[1] Or, *chief prince of Meshech*

in the Old Testament, but they reappear in the Revelation (xx. 8): 'the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog.' The name Magog appears amongst the sons of Japheth in Gen. x. 2 and that of Gog amongst the descendants of Reuben (1 Chr. v. 4). Gog has generally been identified with the Scythians. This identification is as old as Josephus (*Ant.* i. 6, 1) and in the Telel-Amarna tablets we have mention of a country called Gag or Gog. The Septuagint connects the Scythians with Palestine, for it calls Beth-shean Scythopolis, i.e. the city of the Scythians, and Herodotus (i. 103) speaks of an invasion of Palestine by the Scythians. Others see a name of a king in that of Gog, and Prof. Schmidt (*Encycl. Bib.* 4332) identifies him with Mithridates VI Eupator Dionysus of Pontus. (The whole of the article 'Scythians' in the *Encycl. Bib.* will repay careful study.) In late Jewish writings Gog is identified with Antichrist. For Magog Cheyne proposes to read Migdon, here and elsewhere, a name which he connects with a Babylonian deity of the lower world, and also with the Har-Magedon of Rev. xvi. 16, which is distinctly called a Hebrew word. It will be seen from a comparison between R.V. and R.V. *marg.* that it is very doubtful whether Rosh is a proper name or not. If it is, then it is probably to be identified with Rasses (Judith ii. 23), a name which occurs in connection with Put and Lud as Rosh does here (see *v.* 5). In that case it is to be remembered that Rasses is identified by the Vulgate with Tarshish, whilst in the old Latin we have 'Thiras et Rasis,' and in Gen. x. 2: 1 Chr. i. 5 Tiras is in close juxtaposition with Magog and Meshech. This may point to Rosh being identical with Tiras, but the whole subject is full of difficulty and obscurity. For Meshech and Tubal see xxvii. 13. The words 'I will turn thee about' begin the prophecy in xxxix. 2, as well as here. The idea of subjugation and control is suggested by the hooks in the jaws (cp. xxix. 4) or in the nose (2 K. xix. 28). The whole display of heathen power and magnificence is represented as

7 thee. Be thou prepared, yea, prepare thyself, thou, and
all thy companies that are assembled unto thee, and be
8 thou a [1]guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be
visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land
that is [2]brought back from the sword, that is gathered out
of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have
been a continual waste: but it is brought forth out of the
9 peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them. And
thou shalt ascend, thou shalt come like a storm, thou shalt
be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy hordes,
10 and many peoples with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD:
It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come
11 into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil device: and
thou shalt say, I will go up to [3]the land of unwalled
villages; I will go to them that are at quiet, that dwell
securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having

[1] Or, *commander* [2] Or, *restored* [3] Or, *an open country*

being allowed by God. Persia and Put are to be found in xxvii. 10. The Cush here mentioned must be the Babylonian Kassi (cp. Gen. x. 8, where Cush is said to be the ancestor of Nimrod). Gomer, another name from Genesis (x. 2), from which Ezekiel seems to have drawn what we may call his ethnology, corresponds to Cappadocia while the name itself is the same as that of the Cimmerians. The 'hordes' are mentioned again *v.* 22: the Hebrew word is one peculiar to Ezekiel and is Assyrian in origin. For Togarmah see xxvii. 14. The invasion of these hordes is all to come from the north (cp. xxxii. 30: xxxix. 2), just as in Jeremiah (i. 15): 'I will call all the families of the kingdoms of the north.' Gog is bidden to prepare himself for all this so that he may take the lead (R.V. *marg.* 'commander' better than R.V. 'guard'). The command to go forward was in the distant future (cp. Is. xxiv. 22 'after many days shall they be visited'): when that time came they would invade the land which had been previously wasted and then restored to Israel, its inhabitants being collected from their various places of exile (cp. xi. 17), in which they would be dwelling securely (xxxiv. 25, 27, 28). The invasion was to come upon the land like a tornado (cp. Jer. iv. 13).

10–13. The design of the invasion by Gog is described. He looks upon the country as an easy one to invade because of its unfortified villages, and because its inhabitants are not expecting invasion (cp. Jer. iv. 31). The idea of Jerusalem as the centre of the world has occurred already (v. 5). For Sheba see xxvii. 22; for Dedan xxv. 13 (cp. xxvii. 15, 20). The

12 neither bars nor gates: to take the spoil and to take the
prey; to turn thine hand against the waste places that are
now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered
out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods,
13 that dwell in the [1]middle of the earth. Sheba, and Dedan,
and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions
thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take the
spoil? hast thou assembled thy company to take the prey?
to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and
goods, to take great spoil?

lxvii. *The utter destruction of the world-powers still further prophesied in a continuation of the last prophecy.* xxxviii. 14–23.

14 Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog,
Thus saith the Lord GOD: In that day when my people
15 Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it? And
thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts
of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee, all of them
riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army:
16 and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a
cloud to cover the land; it shall come to pass in the
latter days, that I will bring thee against my land, that
the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in

[1] Heb. *navel*. See Judg. 9. 37.

'young lions' are the princes of these places, who are represented as asking Gog whether he has come for booty, implying that they see that this is his intention, and that they will be ready to buy the spoil from him.

14–16. In this prophecy Gog is mentioned without the titles given to him in the previous and following prophecies. The knowledge of the confidence of Israel in its security would be a stimulus to Gog to come from a great distance (cp. *v.* 6: xxxix. 2) to attack the people. The way they are described makes us think of them as being like great bands of Cossacks, covering the land after the fashion of a cloud (so also *v.* 9). The issue of the invasion would be that the Lord would be held in honour more than

17 thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord GOD:
Art thou he of whom I spake in old time by my servants
the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days for
18 *many* years that I would bring thee against them? And
it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall come
against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my
19 fury shall come up into my nostrils. For in my jealousy
and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that
day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel;
20 so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven,
and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that
creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the
face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the
mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places
21 shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I
will call for a sword against him unto all my mountains,
saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against
22 his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence
and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his
hordes, and upon the many peoples that are with him, an

ever by His people (*vv.* 16, 23: xxxix. 13).

17–23. Gog is spoken of as having been prophesied of long before. Just such an incursion had been foretold by Jeremiah (i. 15: vi. 22, 23: l. 41–43) as impending over both Zion and Babylon; there may be a reference also to Deut. xxviii. 49–51 'The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth.' God's fury and wrath were to be excited against Gog, and the prophet evidently expected that great terrestrial commotions would accompany the manifestation of God's anger, just as in the Apocalypse (Rev. xvi. 17–21) the fall of Babylon is accompanied by a great earthquake (cp. also Hag. ii. 6). Land, air, and water were all to be involved (cp. Hos. iv. 3), and to tremble before Jehovah (Ps. cxiv. 7). The prophet also seems to anticipate (*v.* 21) that internecine strife would break out amongst the invaders, just such as took place amongst the Midianites when Gideon's little host made their night attack (Judg. vii. 22) or in Jerusalem during the final siege by the Romans. To add to the horrors of the time pestilence was to overwhelm them, and such a destruction as came upon Sodom and Gomorrah, or the Canaanite hosts at Beth-horon (Is. x. 11: cp. Ps. xi. 6). For the expression 'I will plead with him' see xvii. 20. The language of *v.* 23 seems to have been in the mind of the son of Sirach

overflowing shower, and great hailstones, fire, and brim-
23 stone. And I will magnify myself, and sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

lxviii. *A fresh and independent prophecy takes up once again from its beginning the burden against Gog. It describes the utter destruction of his people, and the burial of the hosts of dead which is to go on for seven months.* XXXIX. 1–16.

XXXIX. 1 And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, [1]prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal:
2 and I will turn thee about, and will lead thee on, and will cause thee to come up from the uttermost parts of the north; and I will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel:
3 and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will
4 cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy hordes, and the peoples that are with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the
5 beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon

[1] Or, *chief prince of Meshech*

when he says 'As Thou wast sanctified in us before them, so be Thou magnified in them before us' (Ecclus. xxxvi. 4).

XXXIX. 1–10. This prophecy begins in much the same way as xxxviii. 2–4, and many of the expressions used are common to the two prophecies. All the strength and power of Gog was to be destroyed. Magog, the land of Gog (*v.* 6), has only occurred before in xxxviii. 2: 'the isles' is an expression which includes the coast-lands of the Eastern Mediterranean, especially of Syria and Asia Minor. Knowledge of the name of the Lord is to be revived in Israel, and from them He is to become known to the nations (cp. xxxvi. 23). For the profanation of the holy name by Israel see xx. 39: xliii. 7. 'The Lord, the Holy One in Israel' is almost identical with 'the Lord, the Holy One of Israel' of Isaiah (xlv. 11). *V.* 8*a* is identical with xxi. 7.

the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.
6 And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell
securely in the [1]isles: and they shall know that I am the
7 LORD. And my holy name will I make known in the
midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy
name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall
know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.
8 Behold, it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord
9 GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken. And they
that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall
make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields
and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the hand-
staves, and the spears, and they shall make fires of them
10 seven years: so that they shall take no wood out of the
field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they
shall make fires of the weapons: and they shall spoil those
that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith
the Lord GOD.
11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give
unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of them
that pass through [2]on the east of the sea: and it shall
stop them that pass through: and there shall they bury
Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The

[1] Or, *coastlands* [2] Or, *in front of*

All the armour of the invading army was to become fuel for the fire (cp. Is. ix. 5 'all the armour of the armed men in the tumult...shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire'). The meaning of the word translated 'handstaves' both by A.V. and R.V. is doubtful. It is either the staff with a clubbed end used by shepherds to protect their flocks from the wild beasts, or a riding stick: the latter sense is more suitable to the context here. The fuel thus acquired was to last for seven years, and in this way spoil was to be gathered from those who had spoiled them.

11–16. The burial of Gog's people is now described: it is located in 'the valley of them that pass through on (*marg.* in front of) the east of the sea.' Such a valley is unknown, but, if we disregard the pointing of the Hebrew word, which is of less value than the consonants, we can translate 'in the valley (or ravine) of Abarim,' and Abarim was a well-known mountain (Numb. xxvii. 12; Deut. xxxii. 49) or range of mountains (Numb. xxxiii. 47) to the east

12 valley of [1]Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house
of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the
13 land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them;
and it shall be to them a renown, in the day that I shall
14 be glorified, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall sever
out men of continual employment, that shall pass through
the land to bury [2]them [3]that pass through, that remain
upon the face of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of
15 seven months shall they search. And they that pass
through the land shall pass through; and when any seeth
a man's bone, then shall he [4]set up a sign by it, till the
16 buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And

[1] That is, *the multitude of Gog.* [2] Or, *with them that pass through those that remain &c.* [3] Some ancient versions omit the word rendered *that pass through.* [4] Heb. *build.*

of the Dead Sea. For a somewhat similar confusion between two meanings of a word cp. Jer. xxii. 20 where A.V. has 'cry from the passages,' R.V. 'cry from Abarim.' Such a district as that to the east of the Dead Sea would be a suitable one for the burial of such a host. The further idea in the next words of the passage is that the burial-ground would be so large that it would block the way for travellers: others by a slight alteration of the text read 'they shall stop them that pass through,' to prevent them becoming defiled, but the change seems scarcely necessary. The name of the valley Hamon-gog simply means 'multitude of Gog.' The land would not be clean till this great time of burial was over; and the people would obtain glory and reputation from it, and God also would be glorified (cp. xxviii. 22 'I will be glorified in the midst of thee'). The obscurity of the meaning in *v.* 14 points to some corruption of the text: but the general drift of the words is obvious that the work of burial would be a constant one: there was probably another mention of Mount Abarim in this verse, or the word for 'that pass through' should be omitted as an accidental repetition of a previous word. Every precaution was to be taken that not a single bone should be left unburied. The existence of a city Hamonah is also problematical. Some see an allusion to Scythopolis (i.e. the city of the Scythians), the ancient Beth-shean, but this appears far-fetched. Others emend the Hebrew and make it mean 'and it was all over with the multitude' (see Hastings' *Dict. s. voc.* Hamonah).

The number seven used more than once in this passage—'seven years,' 'seven months'—is employed as a round number, to imply com-

[1]Hamonah shall also be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land.

lxix. *God's great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, together with the punishment of His people and their restoration and spiritual regeneration.* xxxix. 17–29.

17 And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD: Speak unto the birds of every sort, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that
18 ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of
19 them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice
20 which I have sacrificed for you. And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and
21 with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD. And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see my judgement that I have executed, and my hand that
22 I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know

[1] That is, *Multitude.*

pleteness or thoroughness, as often in the Revelation of St John.

17–24. The birds of prey and ravenous beasts are summoned to the slaughter of the nations and their flocks. The idea recurs again in Rev. xix. 17, 18 'I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great.' The fatlings or bulls of Bashan (cp. Ps. xxii. 12: Am. iv. 1) were a famous breed of oxen. Bashan, well known also for its oaks (xxvii. 6), was a fertile district on the east of Jordan in the north, corresponding very much with the trans-Jordanic territory of half the tribe of Manasseh. The sacrifice is said to be God's because it was allowed by Him in His Providential

that I am the LORD their God, from that day and forward.
23 And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them
24 by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I unto them; and I hid my face from them.
25 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy
26 name. And they shall bear their shame, and all their trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall
27 make them afraid; when I have brought them again from the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations.
28 And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, in that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will
29 leave none of them any more there; neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

ordering of the world. It was to be a very abundant one, so much so as to surfeit the birds and beasts. But its intent was to shew the power and glory of God alike to the heathen and to Israel, as had been already declared (*vv.* 7, 13: xxxvii. 28: xxxviii. 23). The heathen were to realise that both the captivity and the restoration of Israel were God's doing. In their captivity God withdrew or hid his face from them (cp. Deut. xxxi. 17).

25–29. But now there is to be a restoration such as more than one prophet had bidden the people look forward to (cp. Jer. xxx. 3), and it was to include all the descendants of Jacob (cp. xx. 40: xxxvii. 19). Although Israel was restored, they were still to bear the remembrance of their previous disgrace and transgression. This use of the word 'bear' is somewhat harsh: and it can be avoided by a change of position of one Hebrew point; the sentence will then read: 'they shall forget their shame.' Security is the keynote of all the chapters dealing with the restoration (xxxiv. 25, 27, 28: xxxviii. 8). *V.* 27 is a practical repetition of xxviii. 25 (cp. xi. 17). The completeness of the restoration is indicated by the statement that there was to

N. EZEKIEL, *DE CIVITATE DEI.* xl.–xlviii.

This forms the last collection of the prophet's utterances, with the exception of xxix. 17–21 which is dated fifteen years later. The dating throughout is from Jehoiachin's captivity. The year intended here is 572 B.C.

This section may be looked upon as an appendix to the rest of the book and as giving an idealised description of restored Israel, her country, her city and her Temple.

"The Temple is Jehovah's earthly residence: in the restored community, which Ezekiel imagines to be so transformed as to be truly worthy of Him (xxxvi. 22–36), He will manifest His presence more fully than He had done before (xxxvii. 25–28); His re-entry into the Temple, and His abiding presence there, are the two thoughts in which c. xl.–xlviii. culminate (xliii. 1–9: xlviii. 35); to maintain, on the one hand the sanctity of the Temple, and on the other the holiness of the people, is the aim of the entire system of regulations" (Driver, *O. T. Lit.* p. 274).

A connection has been constantly traced between these chapters and those parts of the Pentateuch, which are commonly ascribed to a source P. It does not come within the purview of a commentator on this book to discuss the composition of the Pentateuch or the sources from which it is derived.

For a discussion of the two questions as to the relation of these chapters to any particular part of the Pentateuch, and as to the relative dates of the two, see Introd. pp. xxi. ff.

The ideal is, in some respects, imperfectly worked out. No mention is made of a high priest, and the second of the great yearly Jewish feasts, the Feast of Weeks, is ignored. No satisfactory explanation for the omission of these, important as they are from a Jewish point of view, can be given.

In the ground-plan at the end of this volume, A is the Holy of Holies, B the Holy Place, C the "separate" place and its building, D the position, as conjectured, of the chambers of the Temple.

lxx. *The preface. The prophet is taken in vision to the land of Israel, and given a guide, and bidden to observe and hear all that is shewn and told to him.* xl. 1–4.

XL. 1 In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, in the tenth *day* of the

be no residue left behind, and no more hiding of God's face, but an abundant outpouring of God's Spirit (cp. Joel ii. 28).

XL. 1–4. The first date here is calculated in the same way as the other dates throughout the book from Jehoiachin's captivity (i. 2). The statement made practically agrees with that of xxxiii. 21, which

month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was
smitten, in the selfsame day, the hand of the LORD was
2 upon me, and he brought me thither. In the visions of God
brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me down
upon a very high mountain, whereon was as it were the
3 frame of a city on the south. And he brought me thither,
and behold, there was a man, whose appearance was
like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his
hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate.
4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine
eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon
all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might
shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all
that thou seest to the house of Israel.

dates the arrival of the news of the fall of Jerusalem in 'the twelfth year of our captivity.' The opening words should be compared with i. 1–3 where the 'visions of God' and 'the hand of the Lord' are also mentioned. The city of God is on a very high mountain, and this idea recurs in Rev. xxi. 10 'he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and shewed me the holy city Jerusalem.' Here what the prophet sees is 'as it were the frame' or, rather, the structure of a city, and by the city is meant the new Temple with its surroundings. The guide is mentioned again (xliii. 6: xlvii. 3): here the brilliance of his appearance is described as being like brass; and he has two instruments of measurement with him, as he stands by the gate of the structure. A line of flax would be a measuring line made of linen, such as we call now-a-days a 'tape'; and the measuring reed would be a rod. Its use is described xlii. 16–19 and we may also compare Rev. xi. 1 'there was given unto me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein' (cp. Rev. xxi. 15, 16). A similar appeal for attention is made to the prophet later (xliv. 5), in order that his account to the people might be accurately comprehended.

An attempt at a ground-plan and an elevation of the new Temple from Chipiez can be found in Toy's *Ezekiel* pp. 70, 72. At the end of this volume is to be found a ground-plan drawn to scale, together with two sectional drawings of the chambers and the altar.

lxxi. *The outside wall of the Temple, the gate and lodges are described.* xl. 5–16.

5 And behold, a wall on the outside of the house round
about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six
cubits long, of a cubit and a handbreadth each: so he
measured the thickness of the building, one reed; and the
6 height, one reed. Then came he unto the gate which
looketh toward the east, and went up the steps thereof;
and he measured the threshold of the gate, one reed
7 broad: [1]and the other threshold, one reed broad. And
every [2]lodge was one reed long, and one reed broad; and
the space between the lodges was five cubits; and the
threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate toward the
8 house was one reed. [3]He measured also the porch of the
9 gate toward the house, one reed. Then measured he the
porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the [4]posts thereof,

[1] Or, *even one threshold* [2] Or, *guard chamber* [3] This verse is omitted in several ancient versions and Hebrew MSS. [4] Or, *jambs* and so throughout this chapter, and in ch. 41. 1, 3.

5. This verse describes the outer wall of the Temple enclosure. The same wall is probably described in xlii. 20. The dimensions of the measuring reed are given: the cubit here is larger than the ordinary cubit by an handbreadth: it is clear from xliii. 13 'the cubit is a cubit and an handbreadth' that this is the meaning of the words in this verse. This longer cubit is assumed to be the same as the cubit of Solomon's temple, and its length is given (*Encycl. Bib.* 5293) as 20·67 inches.

6. The gate toward the east. This was a great feature in the old temple (cp. x. 19: xi. 1) and is emphasised in the new one (xlii. 15: xliii. 1, 4: xliv. 1). The last clause of *v.* 6 does not seem to be required and is due to a misreading of the MS. The steps of approach seem to have been seven in number (*vv.* 22, 26).

7. At the gate were lodges or guard-rooms, which flanked the threshold.

Somewhat similar guard-rooms are mentioned in connection with Solomon's temple (1 K. xiv. 28: 2 Chr. xii. 11). The last part of *v.* 7 gives the measurement of the threshold of the gate on the inner side ('toward the house'). *V.* 8 is another accidental repetition and should be omitted: see R.V. *marg.*

9. This verse gives the measure-

two cubits; and the porch of the gate was toward the
10 house. And the lodges of the gate eastward were three
on this side, and three on that side; they three were of
one measure: and the posts had one measure on this side
11 and on that side. And he measured the breadth of the
opening of the gate, ten cubits; and the length of the
12 gate, thirteen cubits; and a border before the lodges, one
cubit *on this side*, and a border, one cubit on that side;
and the lodges, six cubits on this side, and six cubits on
13 that side. And he measured the gate from the roof of the
one lodge to the roof of the other, a breadth of five and
14 twenty cubits; door against door. He made also posts,
threescore cubits; and the court *reached* unto the post,
15 the gate *being* round about. And *from* the forefront of
the gate at the entrance unto the forefront of the [1]inner

[1] Or, *porch of the inner gate*

ment of the porch with its posts or jambs (R.V. *marg.*): this porch was also on the inner side of the entrance gate.

10. The number of the lodges (*v.* 7) is now given: three on each side of the entrance: and all of the same dimensions.

11–16. These verses contain other details about the gate, the posts or jambs, and the lodges. Each of the lodges or guard chambers had a border (or 'sill,' Toy) in front of it. The last clause of *v.* 11 is corrupt and does not agree with *v.* 15 where the length is said to be 50 cubits: it is best omitted, the ten cubits of the earlier part of this verse are the width at the top of the entrance steps. *V.* 14 seems to be in confusion: the fact being, that, as the scribes did not understand the details which they were copying, they were particularly liable to error. Scholars seem pretty well agreed that the verse should run 'He measured the porch twenty cubits and adjoining the porch was the court round about the gateway.' In *v.* 15 'the inner porch of the gate' must mean the porch on the inner side of the gate. To these guard-rooms there were latticed windows, just as there were in Solomon's temple (1 K. vi. 4 'for the house he made windows of fixed lattice work'). There were latticed windows also to the arches, probably of an interior colonnade, or, it may be, simply to the porch. By the jambs stood palm trees (cp. xli. 18), either actually growing, or carved work, as in Solomon's temple (1 K. vi. 29).

Can we form any idea of this outer-gateway and its buildings? On climbing the seven steps we are in a line with the outside edge of the wall, at this the threshold begins, which is of the same breadth as the thickness of the outside wall. This

16 porch of the gate were fifty cubits. And there were closed windows to the lodges, and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the [1]arches: and windows were round about inward: and upon *each* post were palm trees.

lxxii. *After passing through the outer gateway, the outer court is reached. This is now described with its three gates, guard-rooms, and pavement, and the three gates opposite them leading into the inner court.* xl. 17–27.

17 Then brought he me into the outer court, and, lo, there were chambers and a pavement, made for the court round
18 about: thirty chambers were upon the pavement. And the pavement was by the [2]side of the gates, answerable unto the length of the gates, even the lower pavement.
19 Then he measured the breadth from the forefront of the lower gate unto the forefront of the inner court without,

[1] Or, *colonnade* The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain.
[2] Heb. *shoulder*.

forms the entrance to a passage between three pairs of guard-rooms fronting one another and with a space between each pair. Past these there was another threshold which led to the gate on the side of the court of the temple. The posts or jambs of the doors were on the outside edges of the dividing partitions which came forward towards the main passage of the gateway.

17–22. The details of the outer court (mentioned again xlii. 1). It should be noticed that there is an outer court, which is left unmeasured, to the temple of God in Rev. xi. 2. The court here is surrounded on three of its sides, the northern, eastern and southern, by chambers (cp. 1 Chr. xxviii. 12) and is itself paved (cp. 2 Chr. vii. 3 'they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement'). The pavement imagined by Ezekiel was such as is described in Esth. i. 6 'a pavement of porphyry, and white marble, and alabaster, and stone of blue colour' (R.V. *marg.*). The thirty chambers include in their number the six lodges. Three tiers of thirty chambers are described later (xli. 6). Toy thinks of these chambers as halls for various religious purposes. The words 'answerable unto the length of the gates' mean that the width of the pavement was the same as the length of the gates, that is, 25 cubits; and the pavement is

an hundred cubits, *both* on the east and on the north.
20 And the gate of the outer court whose prospect is toward
the north, he measured the length thereof and the breadth
21 thereof. And the lodges thereof were three on this side
and three on that side; and the posts thereof and the
arches thereof were after the measure of the first gate:
the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth five
22 and twenty cubits. And the windows thereof, and the
arches thereof, and the palm trees thereof, were after the
measure of the gate whose prospect is toward the east;
and they went up unto it by seven steps; and the arches
23 thereof were before them. And there was a gate to the
inner court over against the *other* gate, *both* on the north
and on the east; and he measured from gate to gate an
24 hundred cubits. And he led me toward the south, and
behold a gate toward the south: and he measured the
posts thereof and the arches thereof according to these
25 measures. And there were windows in it and in the
arches thereof round about, like those windows: the
length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty
26 cubits. And there were seven steps to go up to it, and the
arches thereof were before them: and it had palm trees,
one on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts

called the lower pavement, as compared with that of the 'inner court,' which stood higher. The measurement of *v.* 19 is that of the inner court from the side of the outer gateway which abutted upon it to the side of the inner court which also abutted upon it. The words 'on the east and on the north' are added to imply that the breadth and length of the court were the same, though of course part of the whole square area was occupied by the temple and the inner court. Into this outer court there were three entrances on the north, east, and south sides. That on the north side is first mentioned, though its dimensions are not given but its guard chambers (R.V. 'lodges') are described. These corresponded exactly with those in the outer eastern gate (*vv.* 13, 15), as did also the windows, arches, and palm trees (*v.* 16). There was a similar set of steps in *v.* 6, but the number was not given. The last words of *v.* 22 mean that the arches (or, colonnade) were beyond the steps.

23–27. Opposite each of the three gates of the outer court were corresponding gates to the inner court of

27 thereof. And there was a gate to the inner court toward the south: and he measured from gate to gate toward the south an hundred cubits.

lxxiii. *The prophet now enters the inner court which is described in its turn with its guard-rooms, arches, gates and jambs.* xl. 28–37.

28 Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate: and he measured the south gate according to these
29 measures; and the lodges thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round about: it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits
30 broad. And there were arches round about, five and
31 twenty cubits long, and five cubits broad. And the arches thereof were toward the outer court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it
32 had eight steps. And he brought me into the inner court toward the east: and he measured the gate according to
33 these measures; and the lodges thereof, and the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and there were windows therein and in the arches thereof round about: it was fifty cubits long, and
34 five and twenty cubits broad. And the arches thereof were toward the outer court; and palm trees were upon

identical measurement; the northern (cp. viii. 3) and eastern are mentioned in *v.* 23, the southern in *v.* 27 to bring it into connection with the mention of it in *v.* 28; and the space between each of these pairs of gates was 100 cubits (*vv.* 23, 27).

28–31. The prophet is now brought to the entrance into the inner court on the south side, where the measurements were the same as those of the northern and eastern gates (*vv.* 7, 24, 25). The measurement of the arches is here given for the first time: they were on the outer side of the entrance, and had palm trees on the jambs of the doorways (cp. *v.* 22). These inner gates had eight steps instead of seven (*v.* 22). *V.* 30 is out of place and is in part a repetition from *v.* 21 or *v.* 25.

32–34. From the south gate the

the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the
35 going up to it had eight steps. And he brought me to
the north gate: and he measured *it* according to these
36 measures; the lodges thereof, the posts thereof, and the
arches thereof; and there were windows therein round
about: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five
37 and twenty cubits. And the posts thereof were toward
the outer court; and palm trees were upon the posts
thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up
to it had eight steps.

lxxiv. *A description of various chambers, with the arrangements for the offering of sacrifices, the measurement of the court, and a mention of the altar in the court.* xl. 38–47.

38 And a chamber with the door thereof was by the posts at
39 the gates; there they washed the burnt offering. And [1]in
the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and

[1] Or, *by*

prophet is taken round to the east gate of the inner court: its description exactly tallies with the last.

35–37. Lastly he is taken to the north gate: the dimensions are the same: the Hebrew word for 'posts' (*v.* 37) should be corrected to 'arches' to correspond with *vv.* 31, 34.

38. The present Hebrew text, represented in R.V., does not make it at all clear where this chamber stood. The Greek version must have had a different text altogether. Its position relative to the entrance is quite uncertain, and it is not stated clearly whether there were corresponding chambers at each of the gates, or whether there was only one; presumably there was only one; but it is impossible to represent it in the ground-plan. In it would stand lavers corresponding to those mentioned in 1 K. vii. 38: 2 Chr. iv. 6: in the latter passage only it is said 'such things as belonged to the burnt offering they washed in them.' From the Levitical laws about the burnt offering (i. 3–17) we gather that the washing was of 'the inwards and the legs' of the victim, and only when it was taken from the herd or the flock.

39–43. The tables for the killing of the sacrifices. There were two tables on each side of the porch of the gateway, four tables in all (cp. *v.* 42). On these tables were slain not only the burnt offering,

two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt offering
40 and the sin offering and the guilt offering. And on the
one side without, [1]as one goeth up to the entry of the
gate toward the north, were two tables; and on the other
side, which belonged to the porch of the gate, were two
41 tables. Four tables were on this side, and four tables on
that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables, whereupon
42 they slew *the sacrifices.* And there were four tables for
the burnt offering, of hewn stone, a cubit and an half long,
and a cubit and an half broad, and one cubit high: where-
upon they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the
43 burnt offering and the sacrifice. And the [2]hooks, an
handbreadth long, were fastened [3]within round about: and
44 upon the tables was the flesh of the oblation. [4]And with-
out the inner gate were chambers for the singers in the
inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; and

[1] Or, *at the stairs of the entry ledges.* [2] According to some ancient versions, [3] Or, *in the building* [4] The Sept. has, *And he led me into the inner court, and, behold, two chambers in the inner court, one at the side of the gate that looketh toward the north, having its prospect toward the south, and one at the side of the gate toward the south, but looking toward the north.*

but also the sin offering (Lev. iv.: there is no mention of washing any part of the victim, as in the case of the burnt offering) and the guilt offering (Lev. v. 1–6, 14–19: again there is no mention of washing). In *v.* 40 a second set of tables are described as being outside the north gate, but the language, as it stands, is confused. These make the eight tables of *v.* 41; four apparently inside and four outside the gateway; and besides these, four tables of hewn stone, on which to lay the instruments of slaughter. It should be remembered that actual altars of hewn stone are forbidden in Ex. xx. 25; but the tables here specified are not altars. The dimensions of these tables are given. We should expect (*v.* 42) 'sacrifices' rather than 'sacrifice': but the term here is probably synonymous with 'burnt offering,' just as the burnt offering is mentioned by itself in *v.* 38. In *v.* 43 the reading 'ledges' is to be preferred: hooks could scarcely have a place. The word 'oblation' is a generic one for the various kinds of sacrifices (cp. Lev. i. 2).

44–46. A description of some other chambers. R.V. *marg.* gives a translation of the Septuagint which had a different text and does not mention the singers. Toy practically adopts this. 'Without the inner gate' means on the side of the gate which opened into the inner court. The appointment of

their prospect was toward the south: one at the side of
45 the east gate having the prospect toward the north. And
he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward
the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of
46 the house. And the chamber whose prospect is toward
the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of
the altar: these are the sons of Zadok, which from among
the sons of Levi come near to the LORD to minister unto
47 him. And he measured the court, an hundred cubits long,
and an hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar
was before the house.

lxxv. *Description of the porch of the Temple itself.* xl. 48, 49.

48 Then he brought me to the porch of the house, and
measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side,

singers for the Temple worship is ascribed in the Chronicles to David (1 Chr. vi. 31, 32) and certainly no ideal temple would be complete without such a body: we need not therefore omit this word. It seems quite clear, however, that the middle of the verse should read 'one at the side of the north gate, having the prospect toward the south, and the other....' In the former was (*v.* 45) a chamber for the priests who were caretakers of the house (cp. xliv. 8, 14–16). In the latter was the chamber for those who had charge of the altar (cp. Numb. iii. 31: xviii. 5), who were descendants of Zadok who had a lower office because of their former lapse into idolatry (cp. xliii. 19: xliv. 15). The Zadok here mentioned is to be identified with the Zadok of David and Solomon's time (1 K. i. 26: iii. 25: 1 Chr. xxiv. 3, 6). These north and south chambers are mentioned in the same connection in xlii. 13; whether they are the same as the singers' chambers or different from them is not clear.

Where so much is conjectural, it is difficult to locate these chambers, but perhaps some of them occupied the spaces marked D in the plan.

47. This verse gives us the measurement of the inner court, with the altar in the centre of it in front of the actual temple. For the measurements cp. xli. 13–15 and see the note there. The altar corresponded to 'the altar of burnt offering at the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting' (Ex. xl. 29); and at the dedication of Solomon's temple, we are told that he hallowed 'the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord' (1 K. viii. 64: 2 Chr. vii. 7).

48, 49. Here follows a description of the porch of the temple of which further details are given in xli. 25,

and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side.
49 The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; [1]even by the steps whereby they went up to it: and there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

lxxvi. *A description of the Temple with its side-chambers, basement, and 'the building that was before the separate place.'* xli. 1–14.

XLI. 1 And he brought me to the temple, and measured the posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits broad on the other side, which was the
2 breadth of the [2]tabernacle. And the breadth of the entrance was ten cubits; and the [3]sides of the entrance were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the

[1] The Sept. has, *and by ten steps they went &c.*
[2] Heb. *tent.* See Ex. 26. 22–25. [3] Heb. *shoulders.*

26. Its length was the same as that of the porch in Solomon's temple, but its breadth was one cubit more (cp. 1 K. vi. 3), or two if we follow the Greek, which here has the clearer text. The posts were the jambs of the door, and in front of them stood two pillars like the Jachin and Boaz of Solomon's temple (1 K. vii. 21: 2 Chr. iii. 17). The measure of five cubits is that of the thickness of the jambs. The 'length' of the porch is the length along which one would go on the way into the Temple. The middle clause of *v.* 49 must be read, following the Septuagint (see R.V. *marg.*): 'by ten steps they went up to it.' The measurements of the gate are different in the Greek and give the breadth of the entrance as fourteen cubits. Some excellent illustrations to the whole of these chapters are to be found in Toy's *Ezekiel.*

XLI. 1–4. The measurements on the inner side of the entrance and of the wall of the Temple now follow. The posts were the jambs on this side of the entrance. As the Hebrew text stands, the thickness of the jambs corresponds with the breadth of the old tabernacle, of which a description is given in Ex. xxvi. 1–30: xxxvi. 8–34, though the six cubit measurement does not occur in either of those places. In consequence, many omit with the Septuagint the words 'which was the breadth of the tabernacle,' which certainly seem out of place here. In *v.* 2 the thickness of the side walls of the entrance is given in

other side: and he measured the length thereof, forty
3 cubits, and the breadth, twenty cubits. Then went he inward, and measured each post of the entrance, two cubits: and the entrance, six cubits; and the breadth of
4 the entrance, seven cubits. And he measured the length thereof, twenty cubits, and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple: and he said unto me, This is the most
5 holy place. Then he measured the wall of the house, six cubits; and the breadth of every side-chamber, four cubits,
6 round about the house on every side. And the side-chambers were in three stories, one over another, and thirty in order; and they entered into the wall which belonged to the house for the side-chambers round about, that they might have hold *therein*, and not have hold in
7 the wall of the house. And [1]the side-chambers were broader as they encompassed *the house* higher and higher; for the encompassing of the house went higher and higher round about the house: therefore the breadth of the

[1] Or, *there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side-chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house*

the second clause, followed by the interior dimensions of the outer chamber. The forty cubits of length correspond with the same measure in 1 K. vi. 17 and the twenty cubits of breadth with that in 1 K. vi. 2: 2 Chr. iii. 4. In *vv.* 3, 4 we are taken on through this outer chamber to the entrance of and then into the Holy of Holies. The jambs of this entrance were two cubits thick, the 'six cubits' is the length of the entrance to be passed through. The Holy of Holies here is of the same length and breadth as in Solomon's temple (1 K. vi. 16, 20: 2 Chr. iii. 8); this part of the Temple is called in 1 K., following one etymology of the Hebrew word, 'the oracle.' Further details of both the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies are given in *vv.* 21, 23. Ezekiel's guide does not take him into the Holy of Holies, for no ordinary priest could enter there but only the high priest (cp. Heb. ix. 7 'but into the second tabernacle the high priest alone').

5–12. Details about the side-chambers. Six cubits is the thickness of the Temple wall, and the breadth of the side-chamber is its internal breadth. There were such chambers in Solomon's temple (1 K. vi. 5, 6, 8, 10). They were thirty in number as in the outer court (xl. 17), and there were apparently ledges in the wall to

house *continued* upward; and so one went up *from* the lowest *chamber* to the highest by the middle *chamber*.
8 I saw also [1]that the house had [2]a raised basement round about: the foundations of the side-chambers were a full
9 reed [3]of six great cubits. The thickness of the wall, which was for the side-chambers, on the outside, was five cubits: [4]and that which was left was the place of the side-chambers
10 that belonged to the house. And between the chambers was a breadth of twenty cubits round about the house on
11 every side. And the doors of the side-chambers were toward *the place* that was left, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south: and the breadth of
12 the place that was left was five cubits round about. And the building that was before the separate place at the side toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick round about, and the
13 length thereof ninety cubits. So he measured the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place, and the

[1] Or, *that the house was high round about* [2] Heb. *height.* [3] Or, *of six cubits to the joining* [4] The Sept. has, *and that which was left between the side-chambers that belonged to the house and between the chambers was &c.*

which they were attached, so as not to break into the wall of the Temple (*v.* 6: cp. 1 K. vi. 6 where these ledges are called 'rebatements'). There were three stories of them, and each story above the first was wider than the one below it: there seems also to have been a circular staircase to ascend to the higher floors (see R.V. *marg.*). This extra width was gained by the further projection of each ledge or 'rebatement.' See the section of the chambers at the end of this volume. Round the Temple was a raised platform (R.V. 'basement': cp. xl. 17). The great cubit was that 'of a cubit and an handbreadth each' (xl. 5: xliii. 13). The wall of *v.* 9 is the outer wall of the side-chambers: and 'that which was left' was the remainder of the platform outside the chambers. The twenty cubits (*v.* 10) was the part of the inner court which was not built upon (cp. xlii. 3). The chambers had doors opening upon the platform, and this was five cubits wide as in *v.* 9. At the back of the Temple was a 'building before the separate place'—a place apparently used as a receptacle for ashes and as a storehouse. Between the Temple and this building was part of the court which went all round the Temple. See C in the ground-plan.

13, 14. The measurement of the Temple externally. The hundred

building, with the walls thereof, an hundred cubits long;
14 also the breadth of the face of the house, and of the
separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits.

lxxvii. *Sundry measurements; an account of the decorations of the Temple, of the altar, and of the doors.* xli. 15–26.

15 And he measured the length of the building before the
separate place which was at the back thereof, and the
galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an
hundred cubits; and the inner temple, and the porches of
16 the court; the thresholds, and the closed windows, and the
galleries round about on their three stories, over against
the threshold, cieled with wood round about, and *from*
the ground up to the windows; now the windows were
17 covered; to *the space* above the door, even unto the
inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about
18 within and without, [1]by measure. And it was made with
cherubim and palm trees; and a palm tree was between

[1] Heb. *measures.*

cubits of length and breadth agree with the measurement of the inner court in xl. 47.

15–17. 'The building before the separate place' has already been mentioned in *v.* 12 (cp. xlii. 1). What is meant by 'the galleries' is not at all clear: they occur again in xlii. 3, 5. The Greek translator could not make them out: he renders the corresponding Hebrew word differently in each of the three places in which it occurs. If we try to picture them to ourselves, they must have been a kind of open arcade on each story of the building: the hundred cubits corresponds to the length of this house in *v.* 13. The 'inner temple' must be identical with 'the most holy place' (*v.* 4). The use of the plural 'thresholds' (cp. Is. vi. 4: Zech. ix. 1) indicates a space divided by columns: the threshold of the Temple was always looked upon as specially sacred. The 'closed' or 'covered' windows were of lattice-work (cp. *v.* 26: xl. 16: 1 K. vi. 4). The 'three stories' come over again in xlii. 3, 6. These galleries were panelled, sides and ceilings alike, with wood in sections (for this is the meaning of the Hebrew 'by measures').

18–20. The panelling was not plain but decorated with cherubim and palm trees (cp. *v.* 25: xl. 16, 22, 26, 31, 34, 37) which were a feature of Solomon's temple (1 K. vi. 29, 32, 35: vii. 36: 2 Chr. iii. 5, 7). The cherubim had two of the four faces

cherub and cherub, and every cherub had two faces;
19 so that there was the face of a man toward the palm tree
on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the
palm tree on the other side: *thus was it* made through all
20 the house round about. From the ground unto above the
door were cherubim and palm trees made: [1]thus was the
21 wall of the temple. As for the temple, the door posts
were squared; and as for the face of the sanctuary, the
appearance *thereof* was [2]as the appearance *of the temple.*
22 The altar was of wood, three cubits high, and the length
thereof two cubits; and [3]the corners thereof, and the
[4]length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and
he said unto me, This is the table that is before the
23 LORD. And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors.
24 And the doors had two leaves *apiece*, two turning leaves;
two *leaves* for the one door, and two leaves for the other.
25 And there were made on them, on the doors of the temple,
cherubim and palm trees, like as were made upon the

[1] Another reading is, *And as for the wall of the temple, the door posts were squared.* [2] Or, *as the* former *appearance* [3] Or, *it had its corners; and &c.* [4] The Sept. has, *base.*

assigned to the living creatures or cherubim of Ezekiel's visions (i. 10: x. 14). The pattern was a constantly recurring one, cherub and palm tree alternating. Toy in his *Ezekiel* gives (p. 189) an illustration from a Cyprian scarab shewing two creatures facing towards a sacred tree. R.V. *marg.* gives the better sense by connecting the last clause of *v.* 20 with the following verse and omitting one occurrence of the word 'temple.'

21. In this verse the posts of the doors were described and also the external surface of the walls of the most holy place, but the text, as it stands, does not give us any sense, as some word must have dropped out. A. B. Davidson's suggestion to connect the last words of this verse with the next does not seem probable: and both R.V. and R.V. *marg.* are only makeshifts.

22. This altar of wood may be such an altar as the altar of incense described in Ex. xxx. 1, or it may be intended to represent the table for the shewbread (Ex. xxv. 23–30). It is mentioned again (xliv. 16), and such a table is mentioned in Malachi (i. 7, 12). The reading of R.V. *marg.* 'base' is to be preferred.

23–26. The doors and the porch of both buildings, the holy place, and the holy of holies, are now described. They correspond with the doors in Solomon's temple (1 K. vi.

walls; and there were thick beams of wood [1]upon the face
26 of the porch without. And there were closed windows
and palm trees on the one side and on the other side, on
the sides of the porch: thus were the side-chambers of the
house, and the thick beams.

lxxviii. *A description of the chambers and the uses to which they were to be put.* xlii. 1–14.

XLII. 1 Then he brought me forth into the outer
court, the way toward the north: and he brought me into
the chamber that was over against the separate place, and
which was over against the building toward the north.
2 Before the length of an hundred cubits was the north door,
3 and the breadth was fifty cubits. Over against the twenty
cubits which belonged to the inner court, and over against
the pavement which belonged to the outer court, was
4 gallery against gallery [2]in the third story. And before

[1] Or, *before the porch*

[2] Or, *in three stories*

31–33) which also had two folding leaves for each door (1 K. vi. 34). The doors were carved like the inside of the walls, apparently only on the inner side. The outer side was more massive with thick beams (so 1 K. vii. 6), unless these words indicate a separate framework in front of the carved work. For the side-chambers see *vv.* 5–9.

XLII. 1–3. The prophet is now made to retrace his steps into the outer court (xl. 17) in the direction of the gate that faced the north (xl. 20). In this court there were chambers and he is taken into one of these that was opposite the separate place with its building that stood in front of the separate place (cp. *vv.* 10, 13: xli. 12, 13). Facing the long side of the inner court, 100 cubits long (cp. xli. 15), was the north door, whereas the length of the chambers, here called the breadth of the court, was 50 cubits (cp. *v.* 8). The 20 cubits (*v.* 3) is explained by the statement made earlier: 'between the chambers was a breadth of twenty cubits round about the house on every side' (xli. 10). The pavement of the court has also been mentioned already (xl. 17) as 'made for the court round about.' These galleries or similar ones have also been already mentioned (xli. 15, 16). Whether we translate 'in the third story' (R.V.) or 'in three stories' (R.V. *marg.*) it is clear that we are to assume that there was a gallery on each story (cp. xli. 16).

4–12. We now reach the description of the chambers, after having been told first that whilst

the chambers was a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of [1]one cubit; and their doors were toward the north.
5 Now the upper chambers were shorter: for the galleries took away from these, more than from the lower and the
6 middlemost, in the building. For they were in three stories, and they had not pillars as the pillars of the courts: therefore *the uppermost* was straitened more than
7 the lowest and the middlemost from the ground. And the [2]wall that was without by the side of the chambers, toward the outer court before the chambers, the length
8 thereof was fifty cubits. For the length of the chambers that were in the outer court was fifty cubits: and, lo,
9 before the temple were an hundred cubits. And from under these chambers was the entry on the east side, as
10 one goeth into them from the outer court. In the thickness of the [2]wall of the court toward the east, before the separate place, and before the building, there were
11 chambers. And the way before them was like the appearance of *the way of* the chambers which were toward the north; [3]according to their length so was their breadth: and all their goings out were both according to their
12 fashions, and according to their doors. And according to the doors of the chambers that were toward the south was a door in the head of the way, even the way directly before the [2]wall toward the east, as one entereth into

[1] According to some ancient versions, *a hundred cubits.* [2] Or, *fence*
[3] Or, *they were as long as they, and as broad as they*

their doors faced the north there was a passage way in front of the building to the west (cp. xlvi. 19) ten cubits wide. It seems quite clear that the Septuagint is right in reading a hundred cubits instead of one cubit, thus indicating the length of the passage. The third row of chambers was shorter than the ones below it, owing to the galleries: and the chambers had no pillars like those pillars in the outer court. *Vv.* 7, 8 indicate that these chambers occupied two sides, as it were, of a quadrangle 100 × 50 cubits. Under these chambers was the eastern entry into the outer court (cp. xlvi. 19): and on the eastern side, as on the northern, there were chambers similarly built in the thickness of the wall. These fronted the separate place and the building by it (cp. *v.* 1: xl. 17) and were exactly like the others (p. 234). They

13 them. Then said he unto me, The north chambers and
the south chambers, which are before the separate place,
they be the holy chambers, where the priests that are
near unto the LORD shall eat the most holy things: there
shall they lay the most holy things, and the meal offering,
and the sin offering, and the guilt offering; for the place
14 is holy. When the priests enter in, then shall they not go
out of the holy place into the outer court, but there they
shall lay their garments wherein they minister; for they
are holy: and they shall put on other garments, and shall
approach to that which pertaineth to the people.

lxxix. *The external measurements of the whole Temple enclosure.* xlii. 15–20.

15 Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner
house, he brought me forth by the way of the gate whose
prospect is toward the east, and measured it round about.

also had a door at the top of the passage fronting toward the east.

13, 14. The use of the chambers that have been described. The sacrificial meals are to be eaten in them by 'the priests that are near unto the Lord,' that is, as would appear from xl. 46, the sons of Zadok. The sacrifices to be eaten there follow the Levitical ordinances; the meal offering (Lev. vi. 16: x. 12, 13), the sin offering (Lev. vi. 26), and the guilt offering (Lev. vii. 7). The shewbread was also by the Levitical regulations eaten 'in a holy place' (Lev. xxiv. 9), but it is not mentioned here. The reservation for the priests of the three offerings mentioned here is also enjoined in Numbers (xviii. 9). According to Ezekiel they would be brought into the chambers after having been laid upon the four tables 'in the porch of the gate' which are specified earlier (xl. 39). A further regulation is that the use of the ministerial garments shall be limited to these chambers and not extended to what went on in the outer court in the sight of the people (cp. xliv. 19). This corresponds with the regulation in Leviticus about the carrying forth by the priest of the ashes of the burnt offering. He is to do this in 'other garments' (Lev. vi. 11). It is to be noted that in the case of the meal offering, the meal would be 'laid' in the chambers till it could be baked for the priests to eat it.

15–20. The measurements given in these verses are the external measurements of the whole enclosure. The east gate by which the prophet came out is always treated as the most important both in the

16 He measured on the east [1]side with the measuring reed,
five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about.
17 He measured on the north [1]side, five hundred reeds, with
18 the measuring reed round about. He measured on the
south [1]side, five hundred reeds, with the measuring reed.
19 He turned about to the west [1]side, and measured five
20 hundred reeds with the measuring reed. He measured it
[2]on the four sides: it had a wall round about, the length
five hundred, and the breadth five hundred, to make a
separation between that which was holy and that which
was common.

lxxx. *The Divine Being takes possession of His Temple, and gives directions to His people, upon the fulfilment of which He promises to be with them for ever.* xliii. 1–9.

XLIII. 1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, even
2 the gate that looketh toward the east: and behold, the
glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east:
and his voice was like the sound of many waters: and the

[1] Heb. *wind.* [2] Heb. *toward the four winds.*

actual temple at Jerusalem (x. 19: xi. 1) and in Ezekiel's ideal Temple (xl. 6: xliv. 1, 4). For the measuring reed see xl. 3. The enclosure was exactly square, and it had a containing wall (cp. xl. 5). The same measurement is repeated later (xlv. 2); in both passages it is clear that 'cubits' is the right reading, not 'reeds' (the reed was six cubits, xl. 5), and so the Septuagint interprets in xl. 17. In the Revelation (xxi. 16) the Heavenly Jerusalem, the City of God, is represented as foursquare and surrounded by a wall, but the dimensions are much larger—12,000 furlongs. The intention of the wall is to mark off the enclosure as a dedicated holy place (cp. xliii. 12). For the symbolism of the foursquare, as denoting perfection, and of the measurements, see Swete on Rev. xxi. 16.

If we retain the word 'reeds,' then we have in these verses the measurements of a clear space between the actual Temple enclosure and an external wall of which each side would then be 3,000 cubits; outside of which again there would be another space 50 cubits wide (xlv. 2: see that passage for the meaning of 'the suburbs thereof'); but this is not so probable.

XLIII. 1–5. The entrance of the glory of the God of Israel into His house. This is witnessed by Ezekiel at the east gate (cp. xlii. 15). The

3 earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the
appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to
the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city;
and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the
4 river Chebar: and I fell upon my face. And the glory of
the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate
5 whose prospect is toward the east. And the spirit took
me up, and brought me into the inner court; and behold,
6 the glory of the LORD filled the house. And I heard one
speaking unto me out of the house; and a man stood by
7 me. And he said unto me, Son of man, *this is* the place
of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where

interchange of expression between 'the glory of the God of Israel' (cp. xi. 22) and 'the glory of the Lord' occurs also in x. 18, 19. The new Jerusalem of the Apocalypse possesses and is lightened by 'the glory of God,' no longer limited as the God of Israel (xxi. 11, 23). The description of the Divine voice as 'the sound of many waters' takes us back to Ezekiel's first vision: 'the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty' (i. 24), and is reproduced in the Apocalypse (i. 15 'his voice as the voice of many waters'). The earth reflects God's glory, just as in Rev. xviii. 1 we are told that 'the earth was lightened with his (i.e. an angel's) glory.' In *v.* 3 the reference in the first clause is to the slaughter indicated in ix. 1, 25, though there is scarcely any description of the prophet's vision in that chapter (see, however, ix. 3); but there is a further reference to the prophet's first vision (i. 4–28) by the river Chebar (i. 1), which is connected elsewhere by him with his later visions (iii. 23: x. 15, 20, 22). The result here 'I fell upon my face' is the same as before (i. 28: iii. 23). The result of the entry by this eastern gate is described later (xliv. 1, 2). After the entry of the glory the prophet is brought by the spirit (cp. iii. 12: viii. 3: xi. 1, 24: xxxvii. 1) into the inner court, just as he had been brought into the inner court at Jerusalem (viii. 16) which was filled at another time with the cloud of the Divine presence (x. 3). The glory itself filled the house as well as the inner court (cp. x. 4, and again xliv. 4). A similar taking possession of the house by the Lord is described in the case of Solomon's Temple (1 K. viii. 10, 11: 2 Chr. v. 13, 14: vii. 1–3) as in that of the Tabernacle (Ex. xl. 34, 35: cp. Rev. xv. 8 'the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple').

6–9. The message to the prophet. The messenger who gives the Divine message is called a man (cp. xl. 3), and is generally accounted to have been an angel in human

I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever:
and the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name,
neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, and by
8 the carcases of their kings [1]*in* their high places; in their
setting of their threshold by my threshold, and their door
post beside my door post, and there was *but* the wall
between me and them; and they have defiled my holy
name by their abominations which they have committed:
9 wherefore I have consumed them in mine anger. Now let
them put away their whoredom, and the carcases of their
kings, far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them
for ever.

[1] Or, according to another reading, *in their death*

form (cp. Rev. xxi. 17 'the measure of a man, that is, of an angel'). He acts as the mouthpiece of God. The leading idea of the message is God's acceptance of the Temple as a dwelling-place in which He promises to abide for ever, if it is kept unpolluted. The description of this Temple as God's footstool corresponds to words ascribed to David (1 Chr. xxviii. 2 'to build an house...for the footstool of our God': cp. Ps. xcix. 5: cxxxii. 7) and to Isaiah (lx. 13 'to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious').

Henceforth God's Holy Name is not to be defiled or profaned (cp. xx. 39: xxxix. 7) by spiritual whoredom—the forsaking of God is often described in Biblical language as a breaking of a marriage tie—and other abominations. The two renderings 'in their high places' (R.V.) and 'in their death' (R.V. *marg.*) represent two different pointings of the Hebrew consonants. The Septuagint has still another reading 'in the midst of them.' The R.V. *marg.* gives the best sense: and the whole idea of the passage is the intrusion by the later kings upon the Temple enclosure with buildings for their own depraved purposes: even in their deaths burial was sought for them in unlawful places. Only a wall separated the regal from Jehovah's buildings. It will be remembered how Joash was rescued from Athaliah and actually lived in the Temple six years (2 K. xi. 3), and that the sepulchres of the kings were in the City of David, and therefore could not have been far from the Temple (cp. 1 K. xi. 43).

Addendum to p. 230.

The last clause of verse 11 means: 'there were the same exits and arrangements corresponding with their doors.'

lxxxi. *The people are to have made known to them the details of the house and all the regulations connected with it and with its rites and ceremonies.* xliii. 10–12.

10 Thou, son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and
11 let them measure the [1]pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, make known unto them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight: that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all
12 the ordinances thereof, and do them. This is the law of the house: upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

[1] Or, *sum*

10–12. The whole design of the new house is to be exhibited with the injunction that it is to be kept most holy: the idea being that the thought of this will make the people 'ashamed of their iniquities' (*v.* 10) in their profanation of the pre-exilic house. So at the very beginning of these visions the command had been given to the prophet: 'declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel' (xl. 4). The word 'pattern' (R.V. *marg.* 'sum') represents a Hebrew word expressing the ideas of shape, measurement and symmetry: and the whole catalogue of terms in *v.* 11 is intended to be exhaustive. The 'form' of the house is its description or delineation; the 'fashion' is its arrangement. The entrances and exits occur again (xliv. 5). The double repetition of 'and all the forms thereof' is not needed. The ordinances and laws (or, law) of the house are all the regulations that are to control its administration and service. The whole of what the prophet was to shew them was to be written down in their presence (cp. xii. 3). The mountain upon which the Temple was to be placed was mentioned at the beginning of these visions (xl. 2). All the included area was to be holy (cp. xlii. 15–20): no royal palace was to have place there.

lxxxii. *Description of the Altar.* xliii. 13–17.

13 And these are the measures of the altar by cubits: (the
cubit is a cubit and an handbreadth:) the [1]bottom shall be
a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by
the edge thereof round about a span: and this shall be the
14 [2]base of the altar. And from the bottom [3]upon the ground
to the lower [4]settle shall be two cubits, and the breadth
one cubit; and from the lesser settle to the greater settle
15 shall be four cubits, and the breadth a cubit. And the
[5]upper altar shall be four cubits; and from the [6]altar
16 hearth and upward there shall be four horns. And the altar
hearth shall be twelve *cubits* long by twelve broad, square
17 in the four sides thereof. And the settle shall be fourteen

[1] Or, *hollow* Heb. *bosom.* [2] Heb. *back.* [3] Or, *at* [4] Or, *ledge*
[5] Heb. *Harel.* [6] Heb. *Ariel.* See Is. 29. 1.

13–17. This altar has already been described as being 'before the house' (xl. 47: cp. xlvii. 1), just as the altar of burnt offering was 'at the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting' (Ex. xl. 29). The measurements are not identical with those of the tabernacle altar (Ex. xxvii. 1–8: xxxviii. 1–7): the cubit of measurement is defined here as before (xl. 5): it is the great cubit of xli. 8. When the details are examined, it is very difficult to understand them. The 'bottom' (R.V. *marg.* 'hollow, Heb. bosom') seems to be a hollow space at the bottom of the altar, used as a drain to carry off the blood, of which the breadth is one cubit, but what the second cubit in the dimensions given refers to is not clear unless it be the projecting part of the 'bottom' not covered by the superimposed altar. What is called 'the border thereof' would then be a kind of moulding. A span is equivalent to half a cubit. Each stage of the altar is of less dimensions than the one immediately below. The vertical section of the altar at the end of the volume shews the relative proportions of each.

The greater settle of the altar is mentioned again in xlv. 19. Both that and the lesser settle have higher structures resting upon them. It will be noticed that R.V. *marg.* gives two Hebrew words 'Harel' and 'Ariel' which are translated by R.V. 'upper altar' and 'altar hearth' respectively. But it seems certain that the former word is a scribal corruption of the latter, and that we ought to read 'altar hearth' in both clauses. The name Ariel is used as a name of Jerusalem in Is. xxix. 1, 2, 7, but its significance is questioned. It may mean 'lion of God' or 'altar hearth of God.' With the present passage before us it is better to give it the latter signification, a meaning

cubits long by fourteen broad in the four sides thereof; and the border about it shall be half a cubit; and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; and the steps thereof shall look toward the east.

lxxxiii. *The Dedication of the Altar.* xliii. 18–27.

18 And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord
GOD: These are the ordinances of the altar in the day
when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon,
19 and to sprinkle blood thereon. Thou shalt give to the
priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which are
near unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a
20 young bullock for a sin offering. And thou shalt take of
the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and
on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border
round about: thus shalt thou cleanse it and make
21 atonement for it. Thou shalt also take the bullock of the

which it also has in the inscription of Mesha king of Moab (l. 12). The four horns of the altar correspond with those of the altar in the tabernacle (Ex. xxvii. 2: xxix. 12: xxx. 2: Lev. iv. 7, 30: cp. Ps. cxviii. 27 'Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar'). To take hold of the horns of the altar was to claim sanctuary (1 K. i. 50), just as the grasping of the knocker at the door of Durham Cathedral gave a right to sanctuary. Like the tabernacle altar the hearth was a perfect square, as was the settle. Unlike the altar in the code of Ex. xx. 26 this altar had steps.

18–27. Seven days are to be occupied with the dedication of the altar, beginning with the day of its completion ('when they shall make it,' *v.* 18). In the offering of the burnt offering there were two stages —the actual shedding of the blood, and the sprinkling of the blood (so Lev. i. 5: iii. 8: 2 Chr. xxxv. 11). Both are alluded to in the New Testament, the actual shedding of blood at the death of Christ, and 'the blood of sprinkling' (Heb. xii. 24: cp. 1 Pet. i. 2 'sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ'). A special use of this sprinkling occurred on the day of the atonement (Lev. xvi. 14–16): the idea intended to be conveyed was the application of the virtue of the sacrifice. Here and in one other place (xliv. 15) we find the Deuteronomic expression 'the priests the Levites' (Deut. xvii. 9: xviii. 1 'the priests the Levites, all the tribe of Levi': xxi. 5 'the priests the sons of Levi': xxiv. 8: xxvii. 9). It does not follow necessarily that the terms 'priests' and 'Levites' each represented an identical body or that all

sin offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place
22 of the house, without the sanctuary. And on the second
day thou shalt offer a he-goat without blemish for a sin
offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did
23 cleanse it with the bullock. When thou hast made an end
of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without
24 blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish. And
thou shalt bring them near before the LORD, and the priests
shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for
25 a burnt offering unto the LORD. Seven days shalt thou
prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also
prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, with-
26 out blemish. Seven days shall they make atonement for

Levites were priests: Deut. xxi. 5 shews us that the only safe conclusion we can draw from the combination is that the priests are specially designated as belonging to the tribe of Levi. Here the body of priests indicated are further limited as being descended from Zadok (see note on xl. 46), the high-priest who anointed Solomon and displaced the line of Eli. It was no doubt because of the views of Ezekiel as to the restoration of 'David,' that, in his ideal Temple, the chief place is reserved for the Zadokites. For the 'young bullock' cp. xlv. 18: Ex. xxix. 1, 10. Similar directions to those of *v.* 20 are to be found in xlv. 19: Ex. xxix. 12: Lev. viii. 15: though the directions about the 'settle' and the 'border' are peculiar to Ezekiel. These sacrifices constitute the mode of cleansing and purifying the altar (so Ex. xxix. 36 'thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou makest atonement for it'). The actual burning of the victim took place elsewhere, as in the tabernacle worship (Ex. xxix. 14 'the flesh of the bullock... shalt thou burn with fire without the camp': cp. Lev. iv. 11, 12, 21: Numb. xix. 3, and the use made of this in Heb. xiii. 11, 12 'Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people through his own blood, suffered without the gate'). 'He' in *v.* 21 is indefinite and means one appointed to discharge that duty. The second and following days the offering of a he-goat without blemish is directed to precede that of the bullock, and a third offering of a ram without blemish was to follow. It would seem from *v.* 25 that it is only by some accident that these offerings are not mentioned as having been made on the first day. An offering of rams followed the offering of a bullock at the consecration of priests (Ex. xxix.), but no exactly similar sacrifice of a he-goat occurs in the Pentateuch: though the offering of a he-goat for a sin offering follows that of a young bullock in Numb. xv. 24 (cp. Deut. xxviii. 22). Salt was a concomitant of all oblations: it was 'the salt of the covenant of thy God' (Lev. ii. 13: cp. Mk ix. 49,

27 the altar and purify it; so shall they [1]consecrate it. And when they have accomplished the days, it shall be that upon the eighth day, and forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD.

lxxxiv. *The prince's entry to the Temple, and a specification as to who else is to have the right of entrance.* xliv. 1–14.

XLIV. 1 Then he brought me back the way of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which looketh toward the east; 2 and it was shut. And the LORD said unto me, This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it, for the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered 3 in by it; therefore it shall be shut. As for the prince, he

[1] Heb. *fill the hands thereof.* See Ex. 29. 24.

according to many authorities 'every sacrifice shall be salted with salt'). Salt was the accompaniment of every meal, and therefore of the sacrificial meal, and, in consequence, was looked upon as the symbol of a perpetual union or covenant between God and man. The period of seven days follows the use at the dedication of the altar in Ex. xxix. 35, 36. The Hebrew expression for consecration 'fill the hands' has its origin in the placing of the sacrifice upon the hands of the offerer (Ex. xxix. 24). The eighth day is often specified in the Jewish ritual (cp. e.g. Lev. ix. 1: 1 K. viii. 66). The peace offerings were first mentioned in *v.* 27, but they come as in Leviticus (iii. 1) after the burnt offerings and the regulation as to the salting of the sacrifices. With this dedication the people were to become once again God's accepted people (cp. xx. 40: Is. lx. 7: Mal. iii. 4: cp. 1 Pet. ii. 5 'to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ').

XLIV. 1–3. These verses deal with the prince's relation to the Temple and its rites. The prophet is brought back from the inner court (xliii. 5) to the eastern gate where he was before (xliii. 1). This gate was for the future to be barred because through it the glory of the Lord had passed (xliii. 4). The prince is the David of whom the prophet has already spoken (xxxiv. 23, 24: xxxvii. 24, 25) and who is mentioned again later (xlv. 7: xlvi. 2). He is to take part in the eating of the sacrificial meals, that is the meaning of his eating bread before the Lord; cp. Ex. xviii. 12 'Jethro, Moses' father in law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of

shall sit therein as prince to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate, and shall go
4 out by the way of the same. Then he brought me the way of the north gate before the house; and I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD:
5 and I fell upon my face. And the LORD said unto me, Son of man, [1]mark well, and behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and [1]mark well the entering in of the house, with
6 every going forth of the sanctuary. And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD: O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all

[1] Heb. *set thine heart upon.*

Israel, to eat bread with Moses' father in law before God.' It is his act of communion with God, and the expression reminds us who have become a kingdom and priests unto God (cp. Rev. i. 6: v. 10) of our communions with Him. If we compare this passage with xlvi. 2, 12, it seems that the prince sat in the porch of the gate, and an exception was made in his case for the gate to be opened, though he did not pass through it.

4–9. The exclusion of the alien. The prophet is again moved to the north gate which has been described earlier (xl. 20), if it be here as there the gate of the outer court. From it he sees the glory of the Lord filling the house (xliii. 5), and it fills him with reverence so that he prostrates himself (i. 28), and in that position receives instruction from the Lord Himself, impressed upon him with emphatic words, almost identical with those at the commencement of these visions (xl. 4). The ordinances, the laws, and the entrances into and goings out from the Temple have also been already mentioned (xliii. 11). In their new and restored condition the people are reminded that they must have done with all their previous transgressions which are specified (cp. xlv. 9 and 1 Pet. iv. 3 'the time past may suffice to have wrought the desire of the Gentiles'). Chief of all was the importation of aliens into the sanctuary (cp. Neh. vii. 64, 65 and the strong measures adopted by Nehemiah in the case of Tobiah, Neh. xiii. 4, and the grandson of Eliashib the high priest who was of mixed blood, Neh. xiii. 28, 29). We may remember in this connection the excitement raised against St Paul in Jerusalem because he was supposed to have introduced Greeks into the Temple (Acts xxi. 38). These aliens are looked upon as not only uncircumcised in their bodies, but also spiritually uncircumcised (cp. Jer. vi. 10: ix. 26:

7 your abominations, in that ye have brought in aliens,
uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in
my sanctuary, to profane it, even my house, when ye offer
my bread, the fat and the blood, and [1]they have broken
8 my covenant, [2]*to add* unto all your abominations. And
ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye
have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for your-
9 selves. Thus saith the Lord GOD, No alien, uncircumcised
in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my
sanctuary, of any alien that is among the children of
10 Israel. But the Levites that went far from me, when
Israel went astray, which went astray from me after their
11 idols; they shall bear their iniquity. Yet they shall be
ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of
the house, and ministering in the house: they shall slay
the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and
they shall stand before them to minister unto them.

[1] Most ancient versions have, *ye*. [2] Or, *in all*

Acts vii. 51, and St Paul's dictum Rom. ii. 29 'circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter'). Their presence at the sacrifices was a profanation. The word 'bread' here must be given a wide interpretation as in Lev. iii. 11 'it is the bread (R.V. *marg.*) of the offering made by fire unto the Lord.' The marginal reading from the ancient versions 'ye have broken my covenant' in *v.* 7 is certainly right. This could not be attributed to the aliens. So too we should translate with R.V. *marg.* 'in all your abominations.' These aliens seem from *v.* 8 to have been employed as deputies by those who ought to have done the work themselves. The consequence is laid down that the alien is absolutely excluded from the sanctuary, so long, we may suppose, as he is uncircumcised in heart and flesh. An inscription on a tablet from Herod's Temple warning off the alien from the court of the Temple is still in existence. It was found by M. Clermont-Ganneau in 1870; its purport is: 'No stranger to enter within the balustrade round the Temple and the enclosure: and whoever is caught shall be responsible for his death following.' A representation of this inscription may be seen in Toy's *Ezekiel* (p. 193).

10–14. The duties of the Levites circumscribed because of their previous transgressions. This limitation seems to include all the tribe of Levi except the sons of Zadok (*v.* 15: cp. xlviii. 11): they had to endure the penal consequences of their sins and only hold inferior

12 Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and
became a stumblingblock of iniquity unto the house of
Israel; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them,
saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear their iniquity.
13 And they shall not come near unto me, to execute the
office of priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my
holy things, unto the things that are most holy: but they
shall bear their shame, and their abominations which
14 they have committed. Yet will I make them keepers of
the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for
all that shall be done therein.

offices about the Temple, such as that described in xlvi. 24. They were some of them to be porters or doorkeepers: it will be remembered that in the regulations ascribed to David (1 Chr. xxix. 1) the Korahites or descendants of Korah (Numb. xvi. 1) appear among the courses of doorkeepers. There is a recollection in the present verse of what Moses said to Korah: —'Hear now, ye sons of Levi: seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself; to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and *to stand before* the congregation *to minister unto them*' (Numb. xvi. 9). By ministering before idols they had led the people wrong (cp. xiv. 3, 4, 7). None of them, therefore, were to be priests, though no doubt some of them wished to have that rank, as in the days of Korah. We read of idolatrous priests, such as are indicated here, in the last days of the kingdom of Judah (2 K. xxiii. 8, 9). They were to be disgraced but still to be given a share in the ministry. That they were in origin priests is clear from the fact that we have mention of a chamber for 'the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house' (xl. 45). In 1 Chr. xxiii. 28, 32 the service of the house is assigned to the sons of Levi to wait upon the sons of Aaron. Here certain Aaronic houses are degraded and counted with the rest of the tribe of Levi. Nothing said here or elsewhere compels us to maintain that every Levite was a priest; though every priest certainly was a Levite; there is much that looks the other way. The degraded priests mentioned in these verses had fulfilled their office at the high places outside of Jerusalem (2 K. xxiii. 9).

lxxxv. *The duties of the priests, the sons of Zadok, in detail, and their privileges and emoluments.* xliv. 15–31.

15 But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that
kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of
Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me
to minister unto me; and they shall stand before me to
offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD:
16 they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near
to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my
17 charge. And it shall be that when they enter in at the
gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen
garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whiles they
18 minister in the gates of the inner court, and [1]within. They
shall have linen tires upon their heads, and shall have linen
breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves
19 with *any thing that causeth* sweat. And when they go forth
into the outer court, even into the outer court to the people,
they shall put off their garments wherein they minister,
and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on

[1] Or, *in the house*

15, 16. General introduction to what follows. On the designation of these priests see xliii. 19, and on the reason of their selection *v.* 10: xlviii. 11. They were permitted a nearer approach to God. The offering of the fat and the blood has been already mentioned in *v.* 7. The Lord's table has been described earlier (xli. 22).

17–19. Special sanctuary garments not to be worn elsewhere. The linen garments correspond to those of Aaron and his sons (Ex. xxviii. 39, 42: xxxix. 27–29: cp. Lev. vi. 10: xvi. 4). They were not to wear wool at the same time; a reason for this is given in *v.* 18: sweat was a form of uncleanness: there may also be a reference here to the legislation against mixed fabrics (Lev. xix. 19 'neither shall there come upon thee a garment of two kinds of stuff mingled together': cp. Deut. xxii. 11 'Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together'). 'Within' (*v.* 17) is equivalent to R.V. *marg.* 'in the house.' Tires were head-dresses, something in the nature of a turban. All these linen garments were to be laid aside and kept in the priests' chambers, as had been directed already (xlii. 14: cp. Lev. vi. 11). The idea was that, if the people touched these sacred garments, they

other garments, that they sanctify not the people with
20 their garments. Neither shall they shave their heads, nor
suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their
21 heads. Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they
22 enter into the inner court. Neither shall they take for
their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they
shall take virgins of the seed of the house of Israel, or
23 a widow that is the widow of a priest. And they shall
teach my people the difference between the holy and the
common, and cause them to discern between the unclean
24 and the clean. And in a controversy they shall stand to
judge; according to my judgements shall they judge it:
and they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all my
appointed feasts; and they shall hallow my sabbaths.
25 And they shall come at no dead person to defile them-
selves: but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for

would thereby become dedicated to the service of God: the same idea is connected with the sacrifices (xlvi. 20 'that they bring them not forth into the outer court, to sanctify the people').

20–22. Various personal regulations with reference to the priests. The regulations about the hair correspond to the Levitical regulations (Lev. xxi. 5). Constant shaving of the body was a distinctive mark of the Egyptian ministry: it was because of this, perhaps, that the opposite law was enforced. The regulation of wine follows that of Leviticus (x. 9), where some have held that Nadab and Abihu's transgression (*v.* 1) was due to indulgence in wine. The choice of a wife is limited as in Lev. xxi. 7, 13, 14, the only difference being that most of the regulations, except that of marriage with a divorced woman, refer there only to the high-priest and that here marriage with a priest's widow is allowed.

23. This regulation in Leviticus (x. 10) comes after that as regards wine (cp. *v.* 21) and is followed there by words corresponding with the central clause of *v.* 24. Neglect of these things had already been attributed to the priests by Ezekiel (xxii. 26).

24. The judicial power here given to the priests corresponds with that assigned to them in Deuteronomy (xvii. 8, 9) and is recognised as being put in motion in the days of Jehoshaphat (2 Chr. xix. 8–10). The breaking of the sabbath is noted as one of the sins of the priests (xxii. 26) and was common among the people (Jer. xvii. 22, 24, 27: cp. Neh. xiii. 15–22, where Nehemiah lays the duty of sanctifying the sabbath upon the Levites).

25–27. Regulations about approaching a dead body, and the

daughter, for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband,
26 they may defile themselves. And after he is cleansed, they
27 shall reckon unto him seven days. And in the day that
he goeth into the sanctuary, into the inner court, to
minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin offering,
28 saith the Lord GOD. And they shall have an inheritance;
I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no posses-
29 sion in Israel; I am their possession. They shall eat the
meal offering, and the sin offering, and the guilt offering;
30 and every devoted thing in Israel shall be theirs. And
the first of all the firstfruits of every thing, and every
[1]oblation of every thing, of all your oblations, shall be for
the priests: ye shall also give unto the priest the first of
your [2]dough, to cause a blessing to rest on thine house.

[1] Or, *heave offering* [2] Or, *coarse meal*

purification necessary afterwards. The exceptions of *v.* 25 correspond exactly with those of Lev. xxi. 1–3. The purification is regulated as in Numb. xix. 11–14. On his return to his duties, at the end of fourteen days, the priest is to offer a sin offering.

28. The priest's inheritance is not of land or property but a spiritual inheritance (so Numb. xviii. 20, 24: Deut. x. 9: xviii. 1, 2: Josh. xiii. 33). This idea is kept up with regard to our own ministry: the word clergy being derived from a Greek word κλῆρος meaning allotment. They are God's portion: He is their inheritance. Thus in the Response 'Bless Thine inheritance' a prayer may be said to be specially offered for the Clergy by the people, just as the Priest has immediately before prayed for the people 'O Lord, save Thy people.' The priests were to have just room enough to dwell in (xlv. 4, 5).

29, 30. The priests' share of the offerings. These regulations answer to those of the Levitical law. For the meal offering see Lev. vi. 16, 18; for the sin offering Lev. vi. 26, 29; for the guilt offering Lev. vii. 6, 7, 9. The assignment of every devoted thing, i.e. every consecrated thing, in Israel is only definitely made in Numb. xviii. 14. The firstfruits are plainly set apart for the priests in Lev. xxiii. 20: Numb. xviii. 12, 13: Deut. xviii. 4. The rendering of R.V. *marg.* 'heave offering' rather than 'oblation' is to be preferred; cp. Deut. xii. 6, 11 'the heave offering of your hand.' The offering of the dough is enjoined Numb. xv. 20, 21 (cp. Neh. x. 38). The exact meaning of the word translated 'dough' (R.V.) is very uncertain; other translations are 'coarse meal' and 'kneading troughs.' By offering the first of the firstfruits to God, the offerer expressed a hope that a blessing might rest upon his house.

31 The priests shall not eat of any thing that dieth of itself, or is torn, whether it be fowl or beast.

lxxxvi. *The apportionment of the land for the Temple, the priests, the Levites, the city and the prince.* xlv. 1–8.

XLV. 1 Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the LORD, [1]an holy portion of the land: the length shall be the length of five and twenty thousand *reeds*, and the breadth shall be [2]ten thousand: it shall be holy in all the
2 border thereof round about. Of this there shall be for the holy place five hundred *in length* by five hundred *in breadth*, square round about; and fifty cubits for the
3 [3]suburbs thereof round about. And of this measure shalt thou measure, a length of five and twenty thousand, and a breadth of ten thousand: and in it shall be the sanctuary,
4 which is most holy. It is an holy portion of the land; it shall be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary, which come near to minister unto the LORD; and it shall

[1] Heb. *holiness.* [2] The Sept. has, *twenty.* [3] Or, *open space*

31. What the priests may not eat. In the earlier legislation (Ex. xxii. 31) such a rule was made for all alike: 'Ye shall be holy men unto me: therefore ye shall not eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field' (cp. Lev. vii. 24: xvii. 15: xxii. 8, where 'that which dieth of itself' is added). Ezekiel claims that he has abstained from these things in iv. 14. The regulation is part of the whole idea of the Jewish legislation that there is to be a distinct separation between holy and profane, between clean and unclean.

XLV. 1–8. A part of the land is to be consecrated for various purposes. Chapters xlvii. 13–23: xlviii. are also concerned with the division of the land. The oblation portion is regulated as to its situation and measurement in xlviii. 8–10. The Septuagint in the best text has 20,000 for the breadth here but 25,000 in xlviii. 9: numbers or their symbols were easily confused with one another in the MSS. 20,000 seems to be the correct measurement. What these 25,000 and 20,000 were the Hebrew and Greek fail to tell us. R.V. follows A.V. in supplying 'reeds' not 'cubits'; 'cubits' seems certainly right (see on xlii. 16): the reed was six cubits (xl. 5). The space 500 cubits square has been already definitely described (xlii. 16–20). The fifty cubits space was a clearing round the 500 cubits

be a place for their houses, and an holy place for the
5 sanctuary. And five and twenty thousand in length, and
ten thousand in breadth, shall be unto the Levites, the
ministers of the house, for a possession unto themselves,
6 *for* [1]twenty chambers. And ye shall appoint the possession
of the city five thousand broad, and five and twenty
thousand long, side by side with the oblation of the holy
7 portion: it shall be for the whole house of Israel. And
whatsoever is for the prince *shall be* on the one side and
on the other side of the holy oblation and of the posses-
sion of the city, in front of the holy oblation and in front of
the possession of the city, on the west side westward, and
on the east side eastward: and in length answerable unto
one of the portions, from the west border unto the east
8 border. [2]In the land it shall be to him for a possession
in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my
people; but they shall give the land to the house of Israel
according to their tribes.

[1] The Sept. has, *cities to dwell in.* [2] Or, *As touching*

square: this is what is meant by the word 'suburbs' here, and it would be better to follow R.V. *marg.* 'open space.' *V.* 3 repeats the statements of *v.* 1 with the addition that the sanctuary was to be included in it (so xlviii. 10), meaning thereby especially the Holy of Holies, of which the measurements have been already given (see xli. 4). All is to be included in the largest area. *V.* 4 must be read with xlviii. 11, 12 and *v.* 5 with xlviii. 13. The last words of this last verse should be read with the Septuagint 'cities to dwell in' (R.V. *marg.*: cp. Josh. xxi. 2): we can scarcely imagine the number of Levites that were supposed to be in attendance being accommodated in twenty chambers. The city portion is more fully described in xlviii. 15–19. Lastly we have the two sections assigned to the prince as in xlviii. 21, 22, and on the part of this prince there was to be no oppression as there had been in former days (cp. xxii. 27: xlvi. 18): the land was to be divided tribally, as it is later on (xlvii. 13, 21: xlviii. 1–7, 23–29).

lxxxvii. *Enactments as to weights and measures, and as to offerings from the people for the prince to make.* xlv. 9–17.

9 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Let it suffice you, O princes
of Israel: remove violence and spoil, and execute
judgement and justice; take away your [1]exactions from my
10 people, saith the Lord GOD. Ye shall have just balances,
11 and a just ephah, and a just bath. The ephah and the
bath shall be of one measure, that the bath may contain
the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah the tenth part
of an homer: the measure thereof shall be after the
12 homer. And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs: twenty

[1] Heb. *expulsions.*

9–12. Enactments as to weights and measures to prevent wrong and exaction. From *vv.* 8, 9 it is clear that the prophet anticipated not merely one prince to come, but a line of princes, and upon one after another of these the following injunctions are laid. There seems no doubt from the literal meaning of the Hebrew word translated 'exactions' (R.V. *marg.* 'Heb. expulsions') that what is denounced is the forcible taking possession by the ruler of any particular land he might fancy (cp. xlvi. 18). Samuel is represented as warning the people that this is what their king would do (1 Sam. viii. 14), and the story of Naboth's vineyard (1 K. xxi.) illustrates the practice. *V.* 10 corresponds to Lev. xix. 35, 36 (cp. Deut. xxv. 13–15: Prov. xi. 1: xvi. 11: xx. 10: Am. viii. 5: Mic. vi. 11) but here just weights are omitted and the bath takes the place of the hin. There seem at various times to have been variations of standard: even in these chapters we have two cubits of different length specified (xl. 5), but here it is ordered that there shall be only one standard (cp. Deut. xxv. 14, 15) and the proportions between the measures are specified. That between the bath and the homer is not defined elsewhere: it should be remembered that in Ex. xvi. 36 we are told that 'an omer is the tenth part of an ephah' (cp. *v.* 16), but the Hebrew word there is different and only occurs in that chapter. The shekel mentioned here is called 'the shekel of the sanctuary' (Ex. xxx. 13: xxxviii. 24: Lev. v. 15: xxvii. 3, 25). The last part of the verse as it stands in R.V., representing the Hebrew, is meaningless: the sense probably is: five shekels shall go for five shekels (i.e. neither more nor less), ten shekels for ten, and your maneh shall be fifty shekels. This follows the Alexandrine MS. of the Septuagint. The value of the homer may be estimated at 80 gallons, and of the ephah or bath at 8 gallons.

It is more difficult to determine

shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels, shall be
13 your maneh. This is the oblation that ye shall offer; the
sixth part of an ephah from an homer of wheat, and ye
shall give the sixth part of an ephah from an homer of
14 barley: and the set portion of oil, of the bath of oil, shall
be the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, *which is* ten
15 baths, even an homer; for ten baths are an homer: and
one lamb of the flock, out of two hundred, from the [1]fat
pastures of Israel; for a meal offering, and for a burnt
offering, and for peace offerings, to make atonement for
16 them, saith the Lord GOD. All the people of the land
[2]shall give unto this oblation for the prince in Israel.
17 And it shall be the prince's part to give the burnt offerings,
and the meal offerings, and the drink offerings, in the
feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all
the appointed feasts of the house of Israel: he shall
prepare the sin offering, and the meal offering, and the
burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make atonement
for the house of Israel.

[1] Heb. *well watered.* [2] Heb. *shall be for.*

the value of the gerah, shekel and maneh respectively, as the standard varied. A long discussion of the whole question is to be found in *Encycl. Bib. s. voc. Shekel*: see also the article *Maneh*. The maneh corresponds to the Greek mina of which sixty went to a talent.

13–17. These verses define the dues which are to be paid by the people in order that the prince may make the proper offerings in their name. The proportion of the offering to the whole is different in the various kinds of offerings, $\frac{1}{60}$ in the case of grain, $\frac{1}{100}$ in that of oil, $\frac{1}{200}$ of the flocks. In the case of the liquid measure the cor and the homer are identical. The bath and the cor both occur in the New Testament in the hundred baths of oil and the hundred cors of wheat of our Lord's parable of the Unjust Steward (Lk. xvi. 6, 7: cp. 1 K. iv. 22: Ezra vii. 22 with R.V. *marg.*). In *v.* 15 the marginal rendering of the Hebrew 'well watered' might just as well have found its place in the text. The meal offering is dealt with in Lev. ii., the burnt offering in Lev. i., the peace offerings in Lev. iii. The idea of atonement was chiefly connected with the sin offering and the burnt offering in the Levitical code (cp. Lev. ix. 7). While the people provided these offerings, it was the duty of the priest to present their offerings himself. In 2 Chronicles (xxx. 24: xxxv. 7) we find the two good kings

lxxxviii. *Of the two half-yearly fasts and festivals, which are apparently intended, one being still the passover, to take the place of the Day of Atonement, and the three great feasts of the Torah legislation.* xlv. 18–25.

18 Thus saith the Lord GOD: In the first *month*, in the
first *day* of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock
without blemish; and thou shalt cleanse the sanctuary.
19 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering,
and put it upon the door posts of the house, and upon the
four corners of the [1]settle of the altar, and upon the posts
20 of the gate of the inner court. And so thou shalt do [2]on
the seventh *day* of the month for every one that erreth,
and for him that is simple: so shall ye make atonement
21 for the house. In the first *month*, in the fourteenth day of
the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven

[1] Or, *ledge*

[2] The Sept. reads, *in the seventh month, on the first* day *of the month.*

Hezekiah and Josiah providing animals for sacrifice, but this is not contemplated here. The drink offerings are constantly mentioned in the Pentateuch (e.g. Ex. xxix. 40: Lev. xxiii. 13: Numb. vi. 15: cp. Gen. xxxv. 14).

18–20. The two days of atonement, one every six months, to take the place of the one on the tenth day of the seventh month (Lev. xvi. 29). The sanctuary was to be cleansed, just as the holy place and the tent of meeting were to be made atonement for (Lev. xvi. 16: cp. Heb. ix. 23 'it was necessary therefore that the copies of things in the heavens should be cleansed with these'). The ritual of *v.* 19 is like that for the altar (xliii. 26) with the addition that here the door posts of the house, as in the offering of the passover was the case with the posts of the dwelling houses (Ex. xii. 7), and the posts of the gate of the inner court (xlvi. 1) were to be sprinkled with blood. For the settle of the altar see xliii. 14. In *v.* 20, which provides for the second day of atonement, the reading of the Septuagint (see R.V. *marg.*) should be preferred. By 'the simple' is meant those that are easily led astray and so commit sin unwittingly (see Lev. iv.).

21–25. The passover and one other feast six months later. The Pentateuchal legislation concerning the Passover is evidently presupposed in these verses: but the actual offerings are different in Numb. xxviii. 16, 25, the only place in the Pentateuch where the sacrifices are specified. There the daily burnt offering is to be two young

22 days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. And upon that
day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the
23 people of the land a bullock for a sin offering. And the
seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to
the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish
daily the seven days; and a he-goat daily for a sin offering.
24 And he shall prepare a meal offering, an ephah for a
bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil to an
25 ephah. In the seventh *month*, in the fifteenth day of the
month, in the feast, shall he do the like the seven days;
according to the sin offering, according to the burnt
offering, and according to the meal offering, and according
to the oil.

lxxxix. *Regulations about the entry of the priest and various festivals.* xlvi. 1–15.

XLVI. 1 Thus saith the Lord GOD: The gate of the
inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the
six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be
opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

bullocks, one ram and seven he-lambs: here it is to be seven bullocks and seven rams: the sin offering is the same. The meal offerings are like those for the sabbath and the new moon (xlvi. 5, 7). The chief legislation about the meal offering is to be found in Lev. ii.: the proportions between the oil and the flour seem to have varied (cp. Numb. xv. 4, 6, 9). The second feast ordained here is the same as the Feast of Tabernacles (cp. Lev. xxiii. 34: Numb. xxix. 12), a very popular feast in post-exilic times (Ezra iii. 4: Neh. viii. 14: cp. Hos. xii. 9: Zech. xiv. 16) and one kept by our Lord (John vii. 2, 10, 14, 37). Here the offerings are made to correspond with those of the passover: in Numbers vii. each day's offerings are different, and an eighth day is added to the feast. It is to be noticed that Ezekiel omits any reference to the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, as also to the Feast of Trumpets which was held a fortnight before the Feast of Tabernacles.

XLVI. 1, 2. The time for opening the gate and the entrance of the prince. The gate of the inner court (here and in xlv. 19) is the same as 'the outer gate of the sanctuary' (xliv. 1: cp. xliii. 1) which was never to be passed by man because the God of Israel had entered that way (xliv. 1–3). By saying that it was to be

2 And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of the
gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and
the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace
offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate;
then he shall go forth: but the gate shall not be shut
3 until the evening. And the people of the land shall
worship at the door of that gate before the LORD in the
4 sabbaths and in the new moons. And the burnt offering
that the prince shall offer unto the LORD shall be in the
sabbath day six lambs without blemish and a ram without
5 blemish; and the meal offering shall be an ephah for the
ram, and the meal offering for the lambs as he is able to
6 give, and an hin of oil to an ephah. And in the day of the
new moon it shall be a young bullock without blemish;
and six lambs, and a ram; they shall be without blemish:
7 and he shall prepare a meal offering, an ephah for the

shut is meant that none were to pass through it: at the same time on the sabbath day and the new moon it was to be set open. In this entrance the prince was to take his place, as had been already laid down (xliv. 3). He was to stand by the post of the gate, one of the posts already mentioned (xlv. 19). Close to these posts was the place where the burnt offering was washed, and the tables stood for the sin offering and the guilt offering (xl. 38, 39). Whilst the offerings were being prepared the prince was to stand close by and worship and then to go out again, without passing through the gate, which was to remain open till the evening. Near the doorway of the gate in which the prince stood the people were to worship on sabbaths and new moons; these two feasts are combined by Isaiah (i. 13) and have already been mentioned here when the prince's part in the sacrifices and offerings was assigned to him (xlv. 17). It will be noticed that to the prince is assigned a much humbler position in the Temple, than that which Solomon is represented as having assumed. The position to be taken up by the prince here reminds us of what happened when Joash the son of Ahaziah was presented to the people, upon the deposition of Athaliah: see 2 K. xi. 14: 2 Chr. xxiii. 13 'the king stood by his pillar at the entrance.'

4, 5. The sabbath offering of the prince in the name of the people. The burnt offering for the sabbath in the law was two he-lambs of the first year (Numb. xxviii. 9, 10): the offering here is much more magnificent. As for the proportions of the meal offering see xlv. 24.

6, 7. The new moon offerings are greater than those of the sabbath by a young bullock. The new moon

bullock, and an ephah for the ram, and for the lambs according as [1]he is able, and an hin of oil to an ephah.
8 And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of the gate, and he shall go forth by the
9 way thereof. But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the appointed feasts, he that entereth by the way of the north gate to worship shall go forth by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth straight before him.
10 And the prince, when they go in, shall go in in the midst of them; and when they go forth, [2]they shall go forth
11 *together*. And in the feasts and in the [3]solemnities the meal offering shall be an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs as he is able to give,
12 and an hin of oil to an ephah. And when the prince shall prepare a freewill offering, a burnt offering or peace offerings as a freewill offering unto the LORD, one shall open for him the gate that looketh toward the east, and

[1] Heb. *his hand shall attain unto. he shall go forth.*
[2] Some ancient authorities have,
[3] Or, *appointed feasts*

feast in the law (Numb. x. 10: xxviii. 11) had greater offerings than those mentioned here:—two young bullocks, one ram, with their meal offerings and drink offerings, and a he-goat for a sin offering.

8–10. The entrances of prince and people. The prince was to go out by the same gate at which he entered in; but, in order to avoid confusion, the people who went in by one gate were to go out by the opposite one. In this way they all appeared before the Lord (Ex. xxiii. 17), prince and people alike, and he was to mix with the people.

11. The regulations about the meal offering are recapitulated. The feasts are those specified in xlv. 21–25, the solemnities or appointed feasts (R.V. *marg.*) are the sabbaths and new moons.

12–15. Regulations about various offerings. The ritual for the prince is to be the same as on the sabbath or new moon (*vv.* 1, 2), if he offers a freewill offering, whether it be a burnt offering or peace offerings. Under the law the freewill offerings seem to have seldom taken the form of burnt offerings. The only difference in the ceremonial was that the gate did not remain open till the evening but was shut as soon as the prince went away. In *vv.* 13–15 we have the regulations for the daily

he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings,
as he doth on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth;
13 and after his going forth one shall shut the gate. And
thou shalt prepare a lamb of the first year without
blemish for a burnt offering unto the LORD daily:
14 morning by morning shalt thou prepare it. And thou
shalt prepare a meal offering with it morning by morning,
the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of
oil, to [1]moisten the fine flour; a meal offering unto the
15 LORD continually by a perpetual ordinance. Thus shall
they prepare the lamb, and the meal offering, and the oil,
morning by morning, for a continual burnt offering.

XC. *Regulations as to the inheritance of land.* xlvi. 16–18.

16 Thus saith the Lord GOD: If the prince give a gift
unto any of his sons, it is his inheritance, it shall belong
17 to his sons; it is their possession by inheritance. But if
he give of his inheritance a gift to one of his servants, it
shall be his to the year of liberty; then it shall return to
the prince; but as for his inheritance, it shall be for his

[1] Or, *mix with*

morning burnt offering: no provision is made for an evening one, such as was ordered by the law (Ex. xxix. 38–42: Numb. xxviii. 3–8: cp. 1 K. xviii. 29, where the evening oblation is referred to, and 2 K. xvi. 15, where 'the morning burnt offering, and the evening meal offering' are mentioned). The proportions of the meal offering are different here from those in Exodus (xxix. 40), where we find $\frac{1}{10}$ of an ephah of fine flour and $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hin of beaten oil, with an addition of $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hin of wine for a drink offering.

16–18. Regulations about land. (*a*) A gift made by the prince to any of his sons is irrevocable. (*b*) One made to any of his servants comes back to him. The prince's allotted share has been described already (xlv. 7, 8). The year of liberty is the fiftieth year, the year of jubile, when every one's possession returned to him. The land was God's: therefore it could not be sold in perpetuity (Lev. xxiii.). The seventh year was the year of liberty for persons but not for land (Ex. xxi. 2). (*c*) A further provision that no one should be forcibly deprived of his inheritance (cp. xlv. 8). It is clear from

18 sons. Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's inheritance, to [1]thrust them out of their possession; he shall give inheritance to his sons out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession.

xci. *Provision of places for cooking the sacrifices.* xlvi. 19–24.

19 Then he brought me through the entry, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests, which looked toward the north: and behold, there was a
20 place on the hinder part westward. And he said unto me, This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, where they shall bake the meal offering; that they bring them not forth into the
21 outer court, to sanctify the people. Then he brought me forth into the outer court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court; and behold, in every corner of
22 the court there was a court. In the four corners of the court there were courts [2]inclosed, forty *cubits* long, and thirty broad: these four in the corners were of one
23 measure. And there was a row *of building* round about

[1] Heb. *oppress.* [2] Or, *joined on*

v. 18 that the kings had deprived their subjects of their possessions to provide for their sons. We may compare also the story of Naboth's vineyard in 1 K. xxi.

19–24. These verses connect themselves naturally with the account of the priests' 'holy chambers' in xlii. 12, 13. They describe the places set apart for the cooking of the sacrifices, whether it was by seething or boiling (both words represent the same Hebrew; cp. 1 Sam. ii. 13–15: 2 Chr. xxxv. 13), in the case of the guilt offering and the sin offering, or by baking in the case of the meal offering (cp. Lev. ii. 4, 5). The same reason is given for this use of these chambers as for the keeping the priestly garments in the holy chambers (xliv. 19). The places for cooking by the priests and by the Levites of the people's part of the sacrifices seem, so far as can be gathered from the present passage, to have been distinct. *V.* 21 means that in the four corners of the outer court there were entrances to other courts where the people's sacrifices were cooked, round the sides of

in them, round about the four, and it was made with
24 boiling places under the rows round about. Then said he
unto me, These are the boiling houses, where the ministers
of the house shall boil the sacrifice of the people.

xcii. *The vision of the waters that came out of the house to make the land productive.* xlvii. 1–12.

"East the forefront of habitations holy
Gleamed to Engedi, shone to Eneglaim:
Softly thereout and from thereunder slowly
Wandered the waters, and delayed, and came.

Then the great stream, which having seen he showeth,
Hid from the wise but manifest to him,
Flowed and arose, as when Euphrates floweth,
Rose from the ankles till a man might swim.

Even with so soft a surge and an increasing,
Drunk of the sand and thwarted of the clod,
Stilled and astir and checked and never ceasing—
Spreadeth the great wave of the grace of God;

Bears to the marishes and bitter places
Healing for hurt and for their poisons balm,
Isle after isle in infinite embraces
Floods and enfolds and fringes with the palm."

* * * * * *

Myers, *Saint Paul*, p. 22.

XLVII. 1 And he brought me back unto the door of
the house; and behold, waters issued out from under the
threshold of the house eastward, for the forefront of the

which were colonnades with boiling places underneath; this is the meaning of the 'row *of building*' (*v.* 23 R.V.). 'The ministers of the house' were all the members of the tribe of Levi except the Zadokites. The cooking of the offerings of the people is specially referred to in 2 Chr. xxxv. 13.

XLVII. 1–6. The source of the waters is under the house. The fertility of all the land in its new condition and under its new leader is to come from God. Perhaps the germ of the idea, which is more fully developed here, is to be found in the words of the Psalmist:

'There is a river, the streams whereof
make glad the city of God,
The holy place of the tabernacles of
the Most High.'
(Ps. xlvi. 4.)

house was toward the east: and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south
2 of the altar. Then brought he me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of *the gate* that looketh toward the east; and behold, there [1]ran out waters on the
3 right side. When the man went forth eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were
4 to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through *the waters*, waters that were to the loins.
5 Afterward he measured a thousand; *and it was* a river that I could not pass through: for the waters were risen, waters
6 to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen *this*? Then

[1] Or, *trickled forth*

A similar idea is to be found in Joel (iii. 18): 'a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim': and in Zech. xiv. 8 'living waters shall go out from Jerusalem.' Again, in St John's Gospel (vii. 38) we have 'rivers of living water' flowing forth from the believer to be a source of blessing to others. In the real Jerusalem there were the waters of Shiloah that go softly (Is. viii. 6: cp. John ix. 7, 11), and in the ideal City of God, the new Jerusalem, of the Apocalypse there is 'a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb' (Rev. xxii. 1). Mystical interpreters of the Old Testament have seen in these verses a prophecy of the spread of the Gospel just as the four rivers into which the river of Eden parted (Gen. ii. 10) were held to be typical of the Four Gospels. The waters came to light under the threshold of the Temple and went away to the east on the south side of the altar; this would be in the direction of the Jordan. The prophet is taken out of the enclosure by the north gate and led round to the east gate,—he could not go through that gate because it was kept shut (xliv. 1, 2: xlvi. 1)—where the waters ran out. He is accompanied by the angel with the line who is introduced at the beginning of these chapters. When they have passed along the side of the stream for a thousand cubits, the prophet fords the stream and finds it comes up to his ankles. At another thousand, he fords the stream again where it comes up to

he brought me, and caused me to return to the bank of
7 the river. Now when I had returned, behold, upon the
bank of the river were very many trees on the one side
8 and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters
issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down
into the Arabah: and they shall go toward the sea; into
the sea *shall the waters go* which were made to issue
9 forth; and the waters shall be healed. And it shall come
to pass, that every living creature which swarmeth, in
every place whither the [1]rivers come, shall live; and there
shall be a very great multitude of fish: for these waters
are come thither, [2]and *the waters of the sea* shall be

[1] Heb. *two rivers.* [2] Or, *that all things may be healed and live*

his knees. At the third thousand he passes through again and the waters come to his loins. At the fourth thousand the river is unfordable. The prophet's attention is directed to this constant deepening of the waters as not being in accordance with the ordinary course of nature, because there had been no tributary streams to increase them.

7–12. Up to this point the prophet's attention has been entirely occupied with the bulk of the waters. Now he pays regard to the banks which are covered with trees. The language of these verses is taken up again in Revelation (xxii. 2): 'On this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner (R.V. *marg.* crops) of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.' The waters were to go down into the Arabah, the depression of the valley of the Jordan north of the Dead Sea and also south of it (Deut. i. 1). The Dead Sea is called the sea of the Arabah (Deut. iii. 17: Josh. iii. 16), and into it the waters were to find their way and by them the waters of the sea were to be healed, i.e. sweetened. The word used is the same as that in 2 K. ii. 21 'I have healed these waters.' The result would be seen in the abundance of fish and other forms of water life that would be produced. The plural 'rivers' is an error of the Hebrew scribe for 'river' (so Septuagint). En-gedi was half way down the western shore of the Dead Sea. It was a strong place in the portion of Judah (Josh. xv. 62) resorted to by David in his wanderings (1 Sam. xxiii. 29: xxiv. 1) and identified with Hazazon-tamar (2 Chr. xx. 2). The vineyards of En-gedi are mentioned in the Song of Songs (i. 14), and the place is like an oasis in the desert. The meaning of the name is 'fountain of the kid.' There is probably an allusion to the place in the Apocrypha (Ecclus. xxiv. 14) where for the more common reading 'on the sea shore' there is read 'I was exalted like a palm tree in Engaddi.' For En-eglaim the R.V. references send

healed, and every thing shall live whithersoever the river
10 cometh. And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand
by it: from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim shall be a place
for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their
11 kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But
the miry places thereof, and the marishes thereof, shall
12 not be healed; they shall be [1]given up to salt. And by
the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that
side, shall grow every tree for meat, whose leaf shall not
wither, neither shall the fruit thereof fail: it shall bring
forth [2]new fruit every month, because the waters thereof
issue out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be
for meat, and the leaf thereof for healing.

[1] Or, *given for salt* [2] Heb. *firstfruits.*

us to Is. xv. 8 but the name Eglaim there is spelt differently in the Hebrew. The site is unknown unless it be identified with Ain Hajleh near the northern end of the Dead Sea (see Tristram, *Bible Places* p. 93 quoted in *Encycl. Bib.* 1292). The prophet had prophesied (xxvi. 14), in a very different way from that in which the words are used here, that Tyre was to become 'a place for the spreading of nets.' The 'great sea' is the Mediterranean (Numb. xxxiv. 6). Though the waters of the sea were to be made fresh, the saline marshes were to remain to provide salt for the people, salt being an indispensable article. The tribute of salt and the salt-pits of Judaea are mentioned in 1 Macc. x. 29: xi. 35; and salt is reckoned among 'the chief of all things necessary for the life of man' by the son of Sirach (Ecclus. xxxix. 26: cp. Job vi. 6: Mk. ix. 50). The 'miry places' and the 'marishes'—marishes being an old form for marshes—are those parts of the shores of the Dead Sea from which the waters retreat after the spring floods (cp. Josh. iii. 15) have subsided. On them is left a deposit of salt. *V.* 12 is connected with *v.* 7 and looks back to Gen. ii. 9 ('every tree that is...good for food') and is practically reproduced in Rev. xxii. 2. The words of Ps. i. 3 resemble those here:—'he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither' (cp. Jer. xvii. 8). The abundance of the fruit is attributed to the source from which it is nourished—the springs from under the sanctuary. The fruit is for food, the leaf for healing ('the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations' Rev. xxii. 2: cp. 2 Esdr. vii. 53 [123] 'a paradise, whose fruit endureth without decay, wherein is abundance and healing'). The healing here would be that from the preceding curse.

xciii. *The borders of the land which is to be divided by lot.* xlvii. 13–23.

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD: This shall be the border,
whereby ye shall divide the land for inheritance accord-
ing to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph *shall have*
14 [1]portions. And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another;
[2]concerning the which I lifted up mine hand to give
it unto your fathers: and this land shall fall unto you for
15 inheritance. And this shall be the border of the land: on
the north side, from the great sea, by the way of Hethlon,
16 unto the entering in of Zedad; Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim,
which is between the border of Damascus and the border

[1] Some ancient versions have, *two portions.* [2] Or, *for that I lifted up*

13, 14. The division of the land among the tribes had already (xlv. 8) been prescribed: it is carried out in xlviii. 1–7, 23–28, but first the boundaries of the whole land have to be described, and an express injunction is made that more than one portion is to go to Joseph, i.e. to Ephraim and Manasseh (cp. xlviii. 4–6, and Gen. xlviii. 22 'I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren': Josh. xvii. 14–18). The meaning of R.V. 'portions,' i.e. more than one portion, is practically identical with R.V. *marg.* 'two portions.' The persons addressed in *v.* 13 are not definitely named: in *v.* 14, at any rate, the whole people are included. The words 'one as well as another' imply an equal distribution. The lifting up the hand was the token of solemn promise: the phrase occurs in the same connection in Exodus (vi. 8 'the land concerning which I lifted up my hand to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage') and the promises to the three patriarchs are to be found in Genesis (Abraham xii. 7: xiii. 15: xv. 18: xvii. 8: Isaac xxvi. 3: Jacob xxviii. 13: xxxv. 12).

15–20. The borders of the land are definitely described: they should be compared with those in Numb. xxxiv. The extreme northern border is described from west to east; the details do not exactly agree either with those in xlviii. 1 or those in Numb. xxxiv. 7–9. It starts from 'the great sea,' i.e. the Mediterranean, and goes by Hethlon (cp. xlviii. 1: not in Numb.), a place not known except here. The name is not recognized by the Septuagint, which seems to have thought of the word as indicating the descent from a cleft or pass in the mountains (of Lebanon ?). If Hethlon is a real name it may be that a village north of Tripoli, called Heitela, should be identified with it. Others would amend the text both here and in Numb. and bring in Hadrach, the name of

of Hamath; [1]Hazer-hatticon, which is by the border of
17 Hauran. And the border from the sea shall be Hazar-enon
at the border of Damascus, and on the north northward is
18 the border of Hamath. This is the north side. And the
east side, between Hauran and Damascus and Gilead, and
the land of Israel, shall be Jordan; from the *north* border
unto the east sea shall ye measure. This is the east side.

[1] Or, *the middle Hazer*

a district in Syria (Zech. ix. 1). Zedad and Hamath are in the wrong order here (cp. xlviii. 1: Numb. xxxiv. 8): 'the entering in of Hamath' is a recognized expression elsewhere (Numb. xiii. 21: Josh. xiii. 5: 1 K. viii. 65: 2 K. xiv. 25) and is an indefinite point on the border of the Hamathite kingdom. Hamath, a still existing city of 50,000 inhabitants, is on the river Orontes. In Amos' time it was called 'Hamath the great' (Am. vi. 2). The next point on the boundary line is Zedad (Numb. xxxiv. 8), perhaps to be identified with Sadad on the road between Riblah—which was on the outskirts of Hamath—and Tadmor or Palmyra. Berothah or Berothai (2 Sam. viii. 8) was in the kingdom of Syria, and is of uncertain situation. 'Bereitan' between Damascus and Baalbec (Baedeker's *Palestine and Syria*, p. 369) seems hardly in the right direction. Sibraim is another unknown place: it seems to correspond with Ziphron (Numb. xxxiv. 9) which has been identified with Zaferâneh, which lies some miles to the south of Hamath. But the identification of all these three places is very uncertain; the prophet uses names well known at the time that fit in with his ideal. Hazer-hatticon (i.e. the middle village) is another very uncertain name: the Septuagint read Hazar-enan. It is placed by the border of Hauran. The Hauran of to-day, called Auranitis by the Romans, is considerably to the south of Damascus. Finally the north border ends at Hazar-enon or -enan (xlviii. 1: Numb. xxxiv. 9, 10), another unidentified spot. The last words of *v.* 17 imply that across the border were the nearest districts of Hamath. The language in *v.* 18 is a little confused but the sense is obvious: the Jordan is the east boundary; on one side of it is the land of Israel, on the other Damascus, the Hauran, and Gilead: no part of the land is to be east of Jordan. The east border is differently defined in Numbers (xxxiv. 10–12). The east sea is another name for the Dead Sea (cp. Joel ii. 20: Zech. xiv. 8). The southern border is reckoned from east to west, and begins at Tamar (xlviii. 28). This may be identical with Hazazon-tamar (Gen. xiv. 7: 2 Chr. xx. 2), which is the same as En-gedi a place half way down the west side of the Dead Sea, but we should have expected to look for the boundary line still more to the south. The waters of Meriboth(-bath, xlviii. 28)-kadesh, identified with the waters of Meribah (i.e. strife) (Numb. xx. 13),

19 And the south side southward shall be from Tamar as far
as the waters of Meriboth-kadesh, to the brook *of Egypt*,
unto the great sea. This is the south side southward.
20 And the west side shall be the great sea, from the *south*
border as far as over against the entering in of Hamath.
21 This is the west side. So shall ye divide this land unto
22 you according to the tribes of Israel. And it shall come
to pass, that ye shall divide it by lot for an inheritance
unto you and to the strangers that sojourn among you,
which shall beget children among you; and they shall be
unto you as the homeborn among the children of Israel;
they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of
23 Israel. And it shall come to pass, that in what tribe the
stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance,
saith the Lord GOD.

were at Kadesh or Kadesh-barnea (cp. Numb. xxxiv. 4): this place is identified with the modern Ain-kades to the south-west of the southern end of the Dead Sea, and it fits in with the description here and in Numbers (xxxiv. 4). The brook of Egypt was the Wady el-Arish which discharges into the Mediterranean (cp. Numb. xxxiv. 5). The words 'of Egypt' are supplied by R.V. to make the sentence clear (cp. Is. xxvii. 12). It was called Rhinocorura in Greek. About the west border there could be no question. It was the Mediterranean. The division as had been already enjoined (xlv. 1: cp. xlviii. 29) was to be by lot, just as had been the case in the original division of the land (Numb. xxxiii. 5: xxxiv. 13: cp. Josh. xiv.–xix.). Here, however, the resident stranger is to have his share (cp. Lev. xix. 34: Is. xiv. 1 'the stranger shall join himself with them [i.e. Jacob and Israel], and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob': Zech. viii. 22, 23: and under the New Testament dispensation Eph. ii. 11–19: iii. 6 'the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body,' cp. Rom. x. 12: Gal. iii. 28: Col. iii. 11 'there cannot be Greek and Jew'), and is to stand on an equal footing with the Jew: just as the stranger under the Law, upon expressing his wish to do so, was, after being circumcised, to be allowed to keep the passover (Ex. xii. 48, 49). Here he is to have his inheritance in the tribe in whose territory he takes up his abode.

xciv. *The portions of seven tribes to the north of the consecrated portion.* xlviii. 1–7.

It is impossible to delineate on any map of Palestine these ideal sections of territory assigned to each tribe in the ideal land. They could only be represented by horizontal lines drawn across the country, and would not fit in with the natural features of the land. All is plainly ideal.

XLVIII. 1 Now these are the names of the tribes: from the north end, beside the way of Hethlon to the entering in of Hamath, Hazar-enan at the border of Damascus, northward beside Hamath; and they shall
2 have their sides east *and* west; Dan, one *portion*. And by the border of Dan, from the east side unto the west side;
3 Asher, one *portion*. And by the border of Asher, from the east side even unto the west side; Naphtali, one *portion*.
4 And by the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto
5 the west side; Manasseh, one *portion*. And by the border of Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side;
6 Ephraim, one *portion*. And by the border of Ephraim, from the east side even unto the west side; Reuben, one
7 *portion*. And by the border of Reuben, from the east side unto the west side; Judah, one *portion*.

XLVIII. 1–7. *V.* 1 repeats very much what has been said about the border of the land in xlvii. 15–17. Hazar-enan is only another form of Hazar-enon (xlvii. 17). The relative position of the tribes is somewhat altered. To begin with, as Ezekiel's ideal division places all the tribes on the west of Jordan, room has to be found, to say nothing of half the tribe of Manasseh, for Reuben and Gad. Taking the tribes in the order in which they stand here, Dan is removed from the south, where its territory lay to the west of Ephraim and Benjamin and made the most northern of the tribes. This may be due to the fact that in Numbers (ii. 25–31) the northern side of the host was led by the standard of the camp of Dan, with whom were ranged Asher and Naphtali, just as they follow here. Further, a northward migration of Dan is described in Judges xviii. and 'from Dan to Beersheba' was one way in which the limits of the land were defined (Judg. xx. 1). Manasseh and Ephraim, the two portions of Joseph, come next, displacing Zebulun and Issachar, who are placed in the south, Issachar being north of Zebulun. South of Ephraim comes Reuben, brought over from the north-eastern side of the Dead Sea; to the south of Reuben is placed

XCV. *The consecrated portion with its various divisions.* xlviii. 8–22.

8 And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto
the west side, shall be the oblation which ye shall offer,
five and twenty thousand *reeds* in breadth, and in length
as one of the portions, from the east side unto the west
9 side: and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it. The
oblation that ye shall offer unto the LORD shall be five and
twenty thousand *reeds* in length, and ten thousand in
10 breadth. And for these, even for the priests, shall be the
holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty thousand
in length, and toward the west ten thousand in breadth,
and toward the east ten thousand in breadth, and toward
the south five and twenty thousand in length: and the
11 sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst thereof. [1]*It
shall be* for the priests that are sanctified of the sons of
Zadok, which have kept my charge; which went not astray
when the children of Israel went astray, as the Levites
12 went astray. And it shall be unto them an oblation from
the oblation of the land, a thing most holy, by the border
13 of the Levites. And answerable unto the border of the

[1] Or, *The sanctified* portion shall be *for the priests of the sons &c.*

Judah, while Benjamin is removed from the north side of Jerusalem to the south of the consecrated portion of the land.

8. The consecrated portion is described as a whole. It was situated to the south of the portion of the tribe of Judah. Instructions about the oblation of land had been already given (xlv. 1–8). For the insertion of the word 'reeds' which is not in the Hebrew see xlv. 1. It should be remembered that the breadth measurements given here are throughout from north to south.

9–12. These verses describe the portion of the priests (cp. xlv. 4) with the actual sanctuary in the middle. *V.* 9 however in the Septuagint is made to give the same sum of the measurements as in *v.* 20, for the breadth is stated to be 25,000. The rendering and reading in *v.* 11 of R.V. *marg.* is to be preferred. Here as before the priests are limited to the sons of Zadok (cp. xl. 46: xliii. 19: xliv. 15). All the rest are classed with the Levites (cp. xliv. 10).

13. The portion of the Levites (cp. xlv. 5). The difference of reading between the Greek and Hebrew

priests, the Levites shall have five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: all the length shall be five and twenty thousand, and the breadth [1]ten thousand.
14 And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange it, nor shall the firstfruits of the land be alienated: for it is holy unto
15 the LORD. And the five thousand that are left in the breadth, in front of the five and twenty thousand, shall be for common use, for the city, for dwelling and for suburbs:
16 and the city shall be in the midst thereof. And these shall be the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and the west side four
17 thousand and five hundred. And the city shall have suburbs; toward the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward the west two
18 hundred and fifty. And the residue in the length, answerable unto the holy oblation, shall be ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward: and it shall be answerable unto the holy oblation; and the increase

[1] The Sept. has, *twenty*.

is caused by the Greek treating the last words as summarising all that has gone before, while the Hebrew is simply a repetition of the preceding clause.

14. Selling or even exchange or alienation of the crops of the consecrated land is not permitted. This regulation follows the spirit of the Levitical law (Lev. xxvii. 10, 28, 33).

15–20. The portion for the city and its suburbs: the produce of it is to feed the inhabitants of the city (cp. xlv. 6). The expression 'common use' means that this part was not to count as directly consecrated to the service of God. The suburbs were simply open spaces not built over which could be cultivated (cp. xlv. 2). In *v.* 16 we have the measurements of the city: it will be remembered that in Revelation (xxi. 16) measurements of the new Jerusalem are given. In *v.* 17 the measurements of the open spaces follow. The remainder of the land is apportioned for cultivation to provide food for the inhabitants of the city, who are to be representatives of all the tribes (cp. xlv. 6 'it shall be for the whole house of Israel') and are to till the land for themselves. The words 'and it shall be answerable unto the holy oblation'

thereof shall be for food unto them that labour in the city.
19 And they that labour in the city, out of all the tribes of
20 Israel, shall till it. All the oblation shall be five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand: ye shall offer the holy oblation foursquare, with the possession of the city.
21 And the residue shall be for the prince, on the one side and on the other of the holy oblation and of the possession of the city, in front of the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward in front of the five and twenty thousand toward the west border, answerable unto the portions, it shall be for the prince: and the holy oblation and the sanctuary of
22 the house shall be in the midst thereof. Moreover from the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, being in the midst of that which is the prince's, between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin, shall be for the prince.

xcvi. *The portion of the remaining tribes to the south of the sacred enclosure.* xlviii. 23–29.

23 And as for the rest of the tribes: from the east side
24 unto the west side; Benjamin, one *portion*. And by the border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west side;
25 Simeon, one *portion*. And by the border of Simeon, from

probably mean that the inner border of these city lands was to march with the border of the dedicated lands. *V.* 20 gives the area included altogether which is to be foursquare (cp. Rev. xxi. 16 'the city lieth foursquare').

21, 22. The prince's portion forms two blocks on the east and west of the whole dedicated land (cp. xlv. 7, 8). It occupies the outside spaces between Judah and Benjamin. For the words 'answerable unto the portions' see the explanation of a similar phrase in *v.* 18.

23–29. In the relative positions of these five tribes, as compared with the actual distribution according to the allotment in Joshua's time, Benjamin takes the place of Judah to the south of the Holy City: Simeon follows: Issachar is brought from the north of Manasseh to lie next: Zebulun comes next, formerly in the north wedged in between Asher and Naphtali; and Gad

the east side unto the west side; Issachar, one *portion.*
26 And by the border of Issachar, from the east side unto the
27 west side; Zebulun, one *portion.* And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto the west side; Gad, one
28 *portion.* And by the border of Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be even from Tamar unto the waters of Meribath-kadesh, to the brook *of Egypt,* unto
29 the great sea. This is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, and these are their several portions, saith the Lord GOD.

XCVII. *The gates of the city and its name.* XLVIII. 30–35.

30 And these are the goings out of the city; on the north side four thousand and five hundred *reeds* by measure:
31 and the gates of the city shall be after the names of the tribes of Israel; three gates northward: the gate of

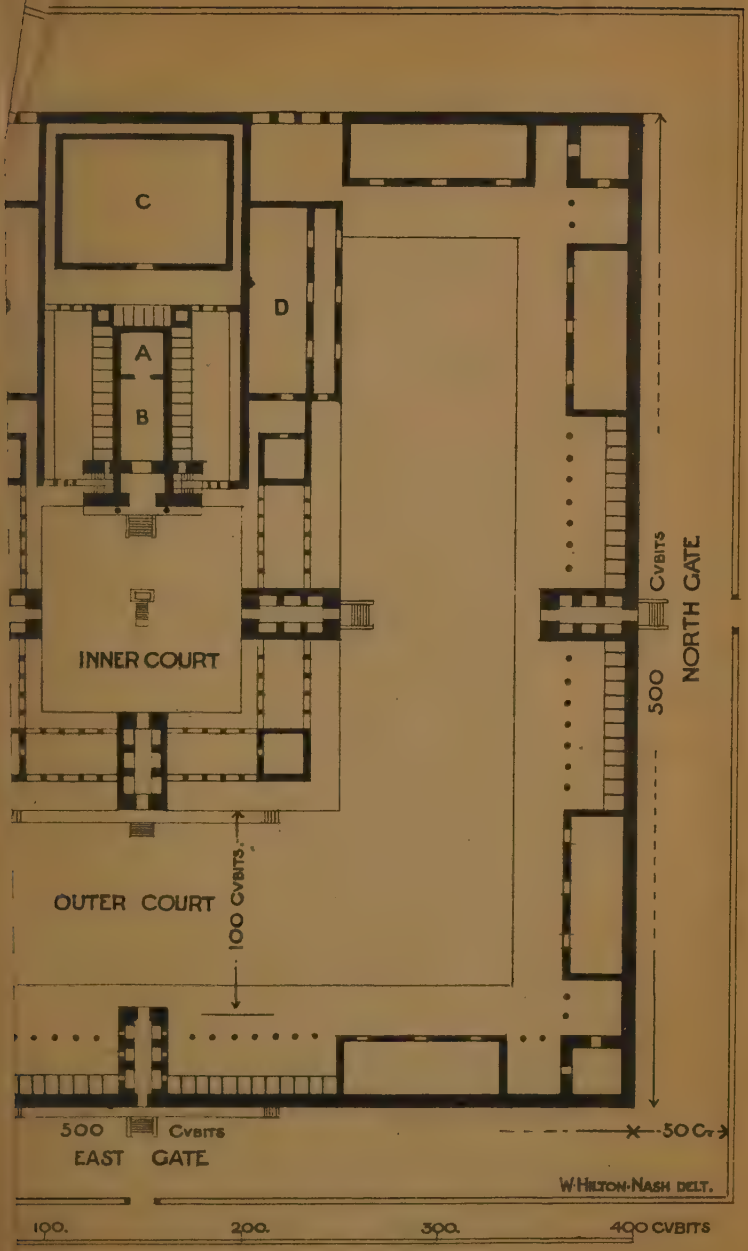
follows last, formerly on the east of Jordan between Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh. The southern boundary of Gad is described almost exactly as the southern boundary of the whole land was described (xlvii. 19), Meriboth-kadesh becoming here Meribath-kadesh. The origin of the name is related in Numb. xx. 13: xxvii. 14: Deut. xxxii. 51. *V.* 29 corresponds with xlvii. 21, 22.

30–35. The goings out of the city are its outside boundaries: their measurements have been already given (*v.* 16). The names and positions of the gates are identical with those in the Apocalypse (Rev. xxi. 12, 13): 'twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon (i.e. on the gates), which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.' It is curious that here, notwithstanding the way in which the land has been divided, Levi is assigned a gate among the first three, and in consequence Ephraim and Manasseh have only one gate between them which is called the gate of Joseph. This is clearly to shew that Levi was not to lose its share in the national life because of its not having a portion assigned it with the other tribes. Reuben, Judah, Levi the three who are mentioned first here come first in the blessing of the twelve tribes ascribed to Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 6–8). The name of the City concludes the book: it indicates the Real Presence of God with His restored people. So Isaiah (lx. 14):—'they shall call thee The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.' We are

Reuben, one; the gate of Judah, one; the gate of Levi,
32 one: and at the east side four thousand and five hundred
reeds; and three gates: even the gate of Joseph, one; the
33 gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one: and at the
south side four thousand and five hundred *reeds* by
measure; and three gates: the gate of Simeon, one; the
34 gate of Issachar, one; the gate of Zebulun, one: at the
west side four thousand and five hundred *reeds*, with their
three gates: the gate of Gad, one; the gate of Asher, one;
35 the gate of Naphtali, one. It shall be eighteen thousand
reeds round about: and the name of the city from that day
shall be, [1]The LORD is there.

[1] Heb. *Jehovah-shammah.* See Ex. 17. 15.

reminded by the form of the name of the Jehovah tsidhkenu ('the Lord our righteousness') of Jeremiah (xxiii. 6: xxxiii. 16). In pre-exilic times 'the Lord was there' (xxxv. 10): His presence had only been temporarily withdrawn: the restored Jerusalem is to have Him dwelling and abiding in it; just as in the Apocalypse it is said of 'the holy city, new Jerusalem,' 'the tabernacle of God is with men and He shall dwell with them' (Rev. xxi. 3). It is to this abiding presence of God that the whole of Ezekiel's description of the ideal city has led up, and in it it finds its consummation. So in the Gospel, specially intended for Jews, the narrative begins with a revelation of Immanuel, God with us, and ends with a promise of a perpetual presence with the redeemed race: 'lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world' (Matth. i. 21–23: xxviii. 20).



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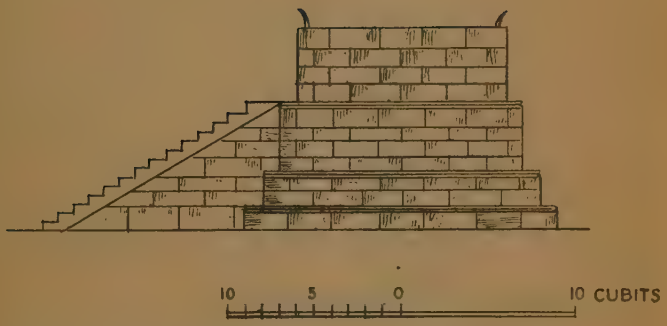

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